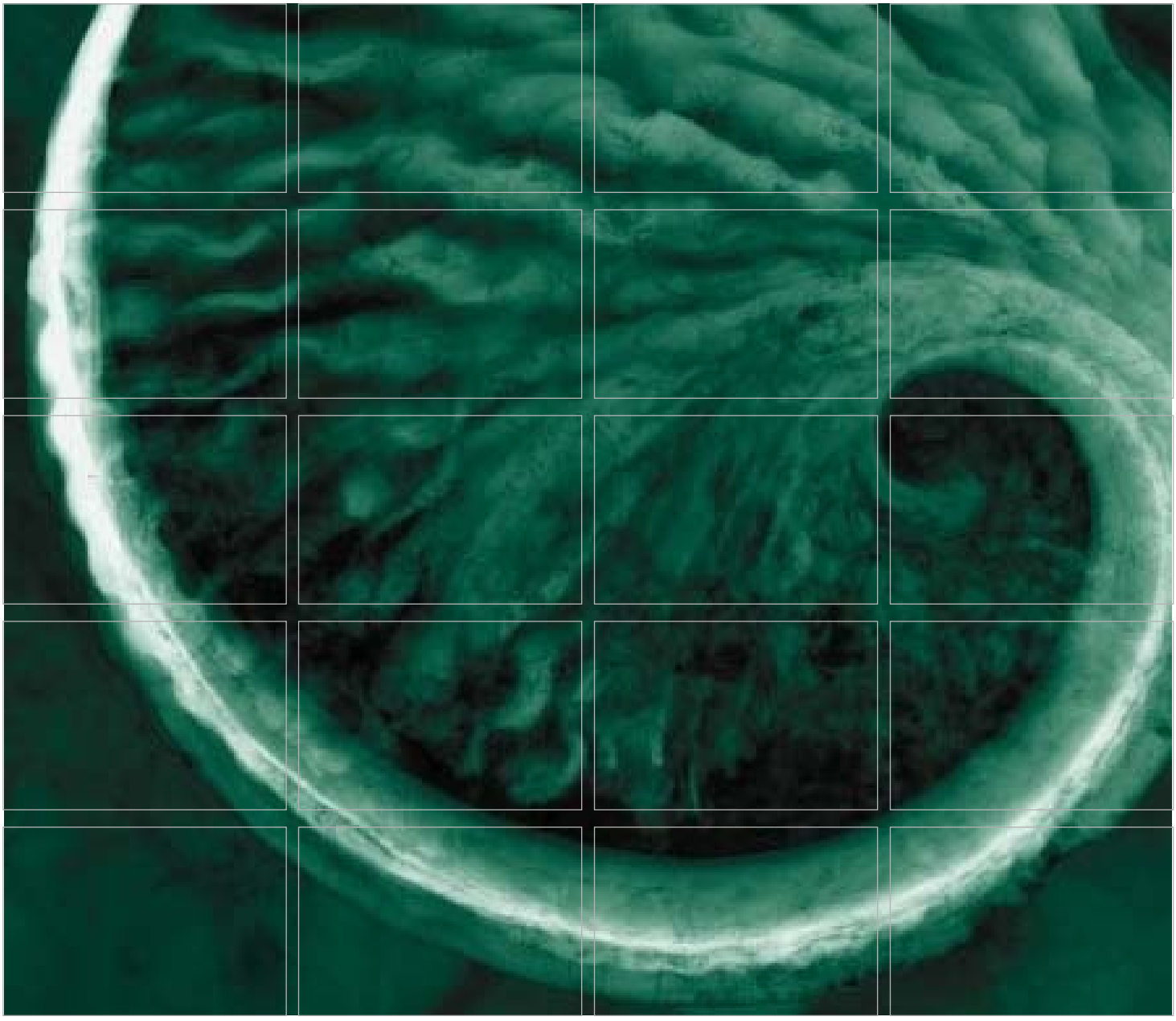

Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

New Hanford Courthouse

Hanford, California

Prepared for:
Administrative Office of the Courts

28 September 2010

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

μg/m^3	Micrograms per cubic meter
ADA	Americans with Disabilities
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
Air District	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
AOC	Administrative Office of the Courts
BGS	Below ground surface
BGSF	Building gross square feet
BMP	Best management practice
CBC	California Building Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CHRIS	California Historic Research Information System
CNEL	Community noise equivalent
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO	Carbon monoxide
CVRWQCB	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
dBA	Decibels on the A-weighted scale
DDE	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethylene
DGSF	Departmental Gross Square Footage
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ERM	ERM-West, Inc.
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
gpm	Gallons per minute
IESNA	Illuminating Engineering Society of North America

KCWD	Kings County Water District
Ldn	Day-night average sound level
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LID	Low Impact Development
LOS	Level of service
mgd	Million gallons per day
M	Magnitude
MDD	Maximum Day Demand
mph	Miles per hour
MS4	Municipal Storm Sewer System
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NO_x	Oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	National Resources Conservation Service
PF	Public Facilities
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PM_{10}	Particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
PPV	Peak particle velocity
ROG	Reactive organic compounds
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
USGS	United States Geological Survey
UST	Underground storage tank
VdB	Vibration decibels
WWTF	Waste Water Treatment Facility Plant

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATUTORY AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); (Public Resources Code Sections 21000-21177) and pursuant to Section 15063 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), the Judicial Council typically acts as the lead agency for courthouse projects. The Judicial Council has delegated this authority to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The AOC prepared this Initial Study to determine if the proposed new courthouse (the "proposed project") for the Superior Court of California, Kings County (the "Superior Court") will cause significant environmental impacts. In its evaluation of a proposed project, the AOC must consider a project's potential environmental impacts by preparing the appropriate environmental documentation as specified by CEQA. If the AOC finds no evidence that the project (either as proposed or modified to include mitigation measures) may cause a significant physical effect on the environment, then the AOC will: 1) find that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and 2) adopt a negative declaration (or mitigated negative declaration) for the proposed project. Alternatively, if the AOC finds evidence that any aspect of the project may cause a significant effect on the environment (even after the addition of mitigation measures); the AOC will determine that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary to analyze project-related and cumulative environmental impacts. The AOC may decide to prepare a negative declaration (or mitigated negative declaration) rather than an EIR only if "there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the lead agency" that significant effects may occur (PRC Section 21080).

The environmental documentation, which will ultimately be approved and/or certified by the AOC in accordance with CEQA, is an informational document to provide an environmental basis for subsequent discretionary actions upon the proposed project. The resulting documentation is not, however, a policy document and its approval and/or certification neither presupposes nor mandates any actions on the part of those agencies from whom permits and other discretionary approvals will be required.

The environmental documentation and supporting analysis are subject to a public review period. During this review, interested parties must

address their comments on the document relative to environmental issues to the AOC. Following review of any comments received, the AOC will consider these comments as a part of the proposed project's environmental review and include them with the Initial Study documentation.

1.2 PURPOSE

The objectives of this Initial Study are to:

1. Identify environmental impacts;
2. Provide the AOC with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR or Negative Declaration;
3. Enable the AOC to modify the proposed project, to mitigate adverse impacts before preparation of an EIR is required;
4. Facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of the proposed project;
5. Provide documentation of the factual basis for the finding in the Negative Declaration that the proposed project will not have a significant environmental effect; and
6. Eliminate needless EIRs.

Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines identifies specific disclosure requirements for inclusion in an Initial Study. Pursuant to those requirements, an Initial Study shall include:

1. A description of the proposed project, including location;
2. An identification of the environmental setting;
3. An identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries;
4. A discussion of ways to mitigate significant effects identified, if any;
5. An examination of whether the proposed project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land-use controls; and
6. The name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in preparation of the Initial Study.

1.3 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration are cited and incorporated in accordance with Sections 15148 and 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines, to eliminate the need for inclusion of voluminous engineering and technical reports within the Initial Study. This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration has incorporated by reference the *City of Hanford General Plan (*"General Plan"; City of Hanford 2002), the *City of Hanford General Plan Update EIR* ("General Plan Update EIR"; City of Hanford 2002), the City of Hanford Municipal Code ("Municipal Code", 2002), and the *Kings County and Cities of Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford, and Lemoore 2003-2008 Housing Element* ("2003-2006 Housing Element"; Kings County 2004). Analysts used these documents d throughout this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, and these documents are available for review on the City of Hanford's ("City") website at:
http://www.ci.hanford.ca.us/Planning%20Division%20Documents.htm

1.3.1 Hanford General Plan

The City adopted a General Plan Update on June 18, 2002. This update reflected revisions to the original (1994) General Plan for the following sections: *Land Use; Circulation; Open Space, Conservation and Recreation; Hazards Management; and Public Facilities Services and Management.* Subsequently, the Housing Element was updated in 2004.

The City intended that the 2002 General Plan would serve as a guide for local government decision-makers, citizens, and development community with respect to land use and development without significant revision to the General Plan through the year 2012.

The General Plan elements reviewed in the preparation of this Initial Study include:

- *Land Use* – including proposed use classifications, build out projections, land use policies, and public services and facilities;
- *Transportation* – including existing and proposed location of the roadway network, transit systems, bikeways and pedestrian paths, as well as scenic roadways;
- *Conservation* – including analysis of open space, agricultural resources, biological resources, air quality, water resources, and mineral resources;

- *Open Space, Parks, and Recreation* – including a comprehensive system of open space, parks, and recreational opportunities available for public use, and identifying historic structures and preservation districts within the city;
- *Noise* – including a discussion of noise includes noise sources, projected contours, and mitigation policies; and
- *Safety* – addressing geology and seismicity, flooding, hazardous materials, and wildfires. Geologic, seismic, and flooding hazards are mapped.

1.3.2 Hanford General Plan Update EIR

The General Plan Update EIR evaluated the potential individual and cumulative environmental effects associated with implementation of the General Plan's policies and programs. The General Plan Update EIR concluded that many impacts could be reduced through mitigation. However, it identified two unavoidable significant impacts: 1) conversion of prime and farmland of statewide importance; and 2) impact of growth on deteriorating air quality.

1.3.3 Hanford Zoning Ordinance

In addition to updating various General Plan elements in 2002 and 2003, the City also adopted the amended Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map in 2002 to bring the Zoning Ordinance and map into consistency with the General Plan.

1.3.4 Housing Element

State Housing Element law requires that cities and counties identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs within their jurisdiction and prepare goals, policies, programs and quantified objectives to further the development, improvement, and preservation of housing. The 2003-2008 Housing Element is consistent with the General Plans of the cities of Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford, Lemoore and the County of Kings (the "County"). Policies and programs set forth in the 2003-2008 Housing Element are consistent with policies and programs in chapters of the respective General Plans.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The AOC proposes to acquire property from the County for a new courthouse site in the City, construct a new, 3-story twelve-courtroom courthouse (with a basement) and associated parking; and operate the facility to serve the Superior Court.

The proposed new courthouse will increase the number of Superior Court courtrooms in the City from eight to twelve and will increase the court facility size from approximately 52,000 building gross square feet ("BGSF") to approximately 145,000 BGSF. The proposed new courthouse will provide support space for court administration, county clerk, court security operations and holding, and building support space. The proposed project also includes construction of a surface parking lot with 360 parking spaces for support staff, visitors, and jurors and a secure parking area for judicial officers and Superior Court managers. The proposed project will be capable of accommodating the Superior Court's future growth for two future new judgeships.

2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Superior Court currently serves the residents of Kings County in four separate County-owned locations: the Hanford court buildings at the Kings County Government Center, the Lemoore Courthouse, the Corcoran Courthouse (operated part-time), and the Avenal Courthouse (operated part-time). The new courthouse will replace existing unsafe, overcrowded, and physically deficient facilities in Hanford and Lemoore.

In Hanford, the Kings County Superior Court's facilities consist of four stand-alone buildings at the Kings County Government Center (Buildings A, B, C, and the Probation Building). Due to severe space restrictions at the Government Center, the Superior Court cannot be housed in one building at that location.

The Lemoore Courthouse is a very small (approximately 7,063 BGSF), single-story building constructed in 1959 that houses both the Superior Court and a county library. It is approximately 10 miles west of the City.

The existing Hanford and Lemoore court facilities contain numerous deficiencies concerning access and efficiency, security, overcrowding and

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility. In addition, the deficiencies prevent the Superior Court from operating safe and efficient court facilities. These conditions significantly hinder the Superior Court's ability to provide a full range of services to its court users.

Table 2.1-1. Superior Court's Current Court Facilities in Hanford and Lemoore, CA to be Relocated to the Proposed New Courthouse

Facility	Address	Notes
Hanford Building A	1426 Hanford Drive, Hanford	17,393 DGSF* with 2 courtrooms Approximately 0.4 miles from proposed project site
Hanford Building B	1426 Hanford Drive, Hanford	19,602 DGSF with 3 courtrooms Approximately 0.4 miles from proposed project site
Hanford Building C	1426 Hanford Drive, Hanford	8,567 DGSF with 2 courtrooms Approximately 0.4 miles from proposed project site
Hanford Probation Building	1424 Forum Drive, Dept. 8, Hanford	1,606 DGSF with 1 courtroom Approximately 0.2 miles from proposed project site
Lemoore Superior Court	449 C Street, Lemoore	5,045 DGSF with 1 courtroom Approximately 10 miles from proposed project site
TOTALS: 52, 213 DGSF with 9 courtrooms (existing)		
*DGSF = departmental gross square feet		

The proposed courthouse will consolidate the dispersed courtrooms and administrative facilities in Hanford and Lemoore into a new approximately 145,000 BGSF building in Hanford. The proposed courthouse will serve the Superior Court, and it will include 12 courtrooms; court support space for court administration, the court clerk, court security operations, and holding; and building support space. To promote efficient operations for the Superior Court and the County, the County will construct a walkway to connect the proposed courthouse with the Kings County Jail. The proposed project will include 360 surface parking spaces for staff, visitors and jurors, and it will also include approximately 17 secure parking spaces for judicial officers and Superior Court executives. The proposed project's main entry will connect to the Kings County Drive extension, which will become the westbound approach to the 12th Avenue/W. Liberty Street intersection, and the proposed project will install a traffic signal control for that intersection. The proposed project's second entry will connect to the County's extension of Kings County Drive.

After completion of the proposed courthouse, the Superior Court will vacate the existing Hanford Court buildings and Lemoore Courthouse. The AOC presumes that the County will utilize the vacated space for its government operations.

2.2 PROPOSED PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a new courthouse that meets the needs of the Superior Court and consolidates the existing facilities to ensure safer and more efficient court services to the public. The proposed project's objectives are to:

- Replace unsafe, overcrowded, and physically and functionally deficient facilities;
- Create a modern, secure, full-service courthouse with adequate access; and
- Consolidate judicial operations from various separate facilities into a centralized location and create operational efficiencies.

2.3 PROPOSED PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project site is in Hanford, approximately 1 mile north of State Route 198, and approximately 4 miles west of State Route 43 (see Figure 1). 12th Street borders the proposed project site to the west, and Kings County Drive borders the proposed project site to the northeast. The site is immediately west of the Kings County Jail (see Figure 2).

2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

2.4.1 Existing Land Uses

The proposed project site is currently graded and has scattered, sparse ruderal vegetation. The only structures on the proposed project site are subsurface city sewer utilities and telephone poles located along the western portion of the property. Gravel-covered unnamed roads traverse the northern and southern portions of the proposed site. There are no indications of wetlands on the proposed site or immediate vicinity of the project site. According to the Phase I ESA, the nearest wetland area was approximately 0.3 miles to the southwest of the property.

2.4.2 Surrounding Land Uses

The following land uses are immediately adjacent to the proposed project site:

- North: Undeveloped land and residential properties;
- South: Undeveloped land due south, and commercial properties;
- East: Kings County Jail; and
- West (beyond 12th Avenue): Residential properties.

The nearest natural large water body is Mussel Slough, located approximately 1.3 miles west of the proposed project site. Kings River is located approximately 6 miles north of the proposed project site.

2.4.3 Existing General Plan and Zoning Designation

Since the AOC is the proposed project's lead agency and is acting for the State of California on behalf of the Judicial Council of California, local land use planning and zoning regulations do not apply to the proposed project. However, the AOC will refer to the Hanford General Plan throughout this document as a guide for decision-making purposes.

As presented in the 2002 General Plan Update (see General Plan Figure LU-3, *General Plan Land Use Map*), the proposed project site is in an area designated as Public Facilities (PF). This designation includes schools, community parks, and storm drainage basins, and activities conducted on property owned by the County or other State, Federal or local agencies.

2.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project will include a courthouse surrounded by landscaped and parking areas. The design will be consistent with other court facilities recently constructed by the AOC with location-specific considerations. The AOC anticipates that the proposed courthouse will be a three-story building and will include a basement level.

The AOC's proposed courthouse design will conform to the specifications of the California Trial Court Facilities Standards (available at: http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/06_April_Facilities_Standards-Final-Online.pdf). These principles include:

- Court buildings shall represent the dignity of the law, the importance of the activities within the courthouse, and the stability of the judicial system;
- Court buildings shall represent an individual expression that is responsive to local context, geography, climate, culture, and history and shall improve and enrich the sites and communities in which they are located;
- Court buildings shall represent the best in architectural planning, design, and contemporary thought and shall have requisite and adequate spaces that are planned and designed to be adaptable to changes in judicial practice;
- Court buildings shall be economical to build, operate, and maintain;
- Court buildings shall provide a healthy, safe, and accessible environment for all occupants; and
- Court buildings shall be designed and constructed using proven best practices and technology with careful use of natural resources.

The AOC will apply the following codes and standards: California Building Code (edition in effect as of the commencement of schematic design phase of the proposed project); CCR, Title 24; California Energy Code, Americans with Disabilities Act; American Disability Act Accessibility Guidelines (Section 11); and Division of the State Architect's Access Checklist.

The proposed project will implement sustainable elements throughout its design, operation, and maintenance. The AOC's design will incorporate features that conform to standards of a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver-certified building, and the building's design will include features to reduce energy consumption by at least 15 percent from the levels of the California Building Code. The LEED Rating System for New Construction includes criteria for features (see Appendix A) related to sustainability, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design processes.

The AOC will implement the proposed project in compliance with standard conditions and requirements for State or federal regulations or laws that are independent of CEQA compliance. The standard conditions and requirements serve to prevent specific resource impacts. Typical standard conditions and requirements include compliance with the

provisions of the California Building Code, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit system, Public Resources Code Section 5097 for discovery of unexpectedly encountered human remains, and San Joaquin Air Quality Management District Rules (including Rule 9510) and Regulations (including Regulation VIII).

The AOC's plans for the proposed project will incorporate specific design elements into the construction and operation to reduce to a level of insignificance any potential environmental effects. The proposed project design features are actions that conform to California Trial Court Facilities Standards specifications. For example, the parties implementing the proposed project will use best management practices (BMPs) and technologies aimed to limit the use of natural resources as well as the proposed project's operating cost over the life of the building. Because the AOC is incorporating the proposed project design features into the proposed project, the design features do not constitute mitigation measures as defined by CEQA.

2.5.1 Real Estate Actions

The County owns the parcel for the proposed courthouse site. The AOC will acquire approximately 7 acres from the County. After completion of the new courthouse, the Superior Court will vacate its current County-owned facilities.

2.5.2 Proposed Courthouse Facility

The AOC anticipates the new courthouse will be a three-story building with a basement, a secured walkway connecting the new courthouse to the existing Kings County Jail, and associated parking and landscaped areas. The building will be approximately 145,000 BGSF and will include 12 courtrooms and space for the following departments and offices:

- Court Administration;
- Courtroom Judicial Support;
- Criminal/Traffic/Family/Juvenile/Appeals Division;
- Family Court Division;
- Jury Services;
- Sheriff Operations;
- Central In-Custody Holding;

- Civil/Probate Division;
- Family Mediation Unit;
- Building Support; and
- Other associated judicial services.

As previously discussed, the proposed courthouse will be located in southwest Hanford between 12th Street and the King's County Jail. The County will construct a secured walkway to connect the proposed courthouse and the King's County Jail. Since the AOC and the County wish to minimize the length of the walkway, the AOC presumes that the courthouse will be on the eastern portion of the AOC's proposed project site and parking will be on the western portion of the proposed project site near 12th Avenue. The proposed courthouse will include secured parking spaces for judicial officers and court executives, on-site parking for staff and visitors, a secured sally port for transport of in-custody detainees, an in-custody holding area, and bicycle parking.

The proposed project includes addition of a traffic signal to the 12th Avenue/Liberty Street intersection and construction of an extension of Kings County Drive to connect to the 12th Avenue/Liberty Street intersection. The proposed project's driveway will connect to the Kings County Drive extension, which will become the fourth leg (westbound approach leg) of the 12th Avenue/W. Liberty Street intersection.

The AOC will base the design of the new courthouse on its *Principles of Design for California Court Buildings* (AOC 2008). As part of the AOC's compliance with the California Building Code, the proposed will include preparation of a geotechnical report and utilization of the report's recommendations to prepare design criteria that will comply with code requirements for geological and soil issues.

The AOC's design will incorporate features that comply with the requirements for LEED Silver Certification. The LEED system includes criteria for green practices that incorporate sustainability, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design processes. Projects receive points for attaining criteria listed in the LEED checklist (Appendix A).

The AOC will implement a lighting plan that complies with LEED requirements. The requirements (United States Green Building Council 2003) relevant to lighting include:

- Meet or provide lower light levels and uniformity ratios than those recommended by the *Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) Lighting for Exterior Environments: An IESNA Recommended Practice* (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America 1999);
- Design exterior lighting such that all exterior luminaries with more than 1,000 initial lamp lumens are shielded and all luminaries with more than 3,500 initial lamp lumens meet the Full Cutoff IESNA Classification;
- The maximum candela value of all interior lighting shall fall within the building (not out through windows) and the maximum candela value of all exterior lighting shall fall within the property; and
- Any luminary within a distance of 2.5 times its mounting height from the property boundary shall have shielding such that no light from that luminary crosses the property boundary.

By meeting LEED requirements, the proposed project will also meet the intent of the Governor's Executive Orders regarding energy efficiency.

In addition to meeting the LEED requirements described above, the proposed project will implement Low Impact Development measures that include dispersing runoff to landscaped areas, routing runoff to rain gardens, cisterns and swales, and other best management features to filter storm runoff. Furthermore, the proposed project's design will prevent on-site flooding and direct runoff to the City's existing storm drain facilities.

2.5.3 Construction Operations

The proposed project will include the construction of the proposed courthouse building and associated parking lots, modification of utilities, and the development of site improvements such as storm drain and access road improvements. There will be no off-site staging areas. The AOC anticipates that construction workers will access the proposed project site primarily from 12th Street. When possible, workers will carpool to the proposed site and will report to a designated on-site staging area. The construction contractor will install fencing around the perimeter of the proposed site to control site access and maintain public safety.

The proposed project will include the construction of the proposed courthouse building, modification of utilities, installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of 12th Avenue/W. Liberty Street, and the development of site improvements. The AOC anticipates that construction workers will

access the proposed project site primarily from 12th Avenue and will park on site. The construction contractor will install fencing around the perimeter of the proposed project site.

Construction activities will include excavation, grading, framing, paving, and coating. The proposed project site currently has no buildings, so there will be no demolition of buildings. The AOC expects that excavation and grading operations will require approximately 6 weeks. Table 2 provides the AOC's estimate of the duration of expected construction activities.

The construction contractor will reuse and keep on-site the maximum amount of materials. Although the AOC has not designed the proposed courthouse, the AOC estimates that the proposed project's construction contractor will excavate approximately 27,000 cubic yards of soil materials and export approximately 24,500 cubic yards of material. Excavation will go no deeper than approximately 15 feet (plus approximately 15 feet for the building's footings) at the proposed footprint of the courthouse's basement. The AOC anticipates that the building will have poured foundations, and the construction contractor will not utilize a pile driver to install piles.

Construction of the proposed courthouse will require approximately 24 months from late 2013 to mid 2015. The Superior Court will consolidate court facilities and operations and begin operations in the new facility in late 2015.

Table 2.1-2. Projected Construction Activities

Construction Phase*	Construction Activity	Projected Duration (Months)	Notes
Mobilization	Preparations for construction	0.5	AOC assumes staging area will cover approximately 10% of site
Demolition	Removal of pavement and utilities	0.5	
Mass grading & excavation	Excavate basement and foundation	0.5	The mass grading and excavation area will cover approximately 0.6 acres, and operations will export approximately 24,500 cubic yards of material
	Construct foundation	0.5	

Construction Phase*	Construction Activity	Projected Duration (Months)	Notes
Trenching	Relocate utilities	1	
Building construction	Assemble frame and floors	3	
	Install exterior and roof	3	
	Finish interior	10	
Coatings	Exterior coating	1	Spray paint and apply water sealants with brushes
	Interior coating	2	Spray paint and coatings
Paving	Install concrete drives, sidewalks, plazas, and other structures. Install asphalt parking lot.	0.5	Includes concrete and asphalt installation
Fine grading	Grade and contour site	0.25	AOC estimates grading area will cover approximately 0.25 acre
Finish	Inspections, testing, clean-up, and other activities	1	
*Construction phases may overlap.			

2.5.4 *Environmental Practices Related to Construction Operations*

The proposed project's construction operations will implement BMPs and other measures throughout the construction phase to avoid or minimize potential impacts. These BMPs and other measures will include:

- General measures:
  - The AOC's construction contactor will designate a contact person for public interaction.
  - The AOC's construction contactor will inform the community through the use of a monthly newsletter or website that identifies the upcoming work and potential impacts to the surrounding communities.
- Cultural resource measures: If construction personnel encounter archaeological resources, the AOC's construction contractor will halt construction in that area of the site until a qualified archaeologist performs an evaluation of the find. If the archaeologist determines the find to be significant, the AOC shall protect the area of discovery from

disturbance to allow the AOC to determine appropriate measures for conserving the resource.

- Storm water, water quality, and soil erosion management measures:
  - Prior to the start of construction activities, the AOC will ensure that the construction contractor prepares a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and secures the Regional Water Quality Control Board's approval of the plan.
  - The construction contractor will incorporate BMPs consistent with the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan ("SWPPP").
  - For construction during the rainy season, the construction contractor will implement erosion measures that may include mulching, geotextiles and mats, earth dikes and drainage swales, temporary drains, silt fence, straw bale barriers, sandbag barriers, brush or rock filters, sediment traps, velocity dissipation devices, or other measures.
  - Wherever possible, the construction contractor will perform grading activities outside the normal rainy season to minimize the potential for increased surface runoff and the associated potential for soil erosion.
- Air quality management measures:
  - When conditions favor generation of dust, the construction contractor will apply water or a stabilizing agent to exposed surfaces in sufficient quantity at least two times a day to prevent generation of dust plumes.
  - When conditions favor generation of dust, the construction contractor will moisten or cover excavated soil piles to avoid fugitive dust emissions.
  - The construction contractor will discontinue construction activities that generate substantial dust blowing on unpaved surfaces during windy conditions.
  - The construction contractor will install and use an appropriate system to remove bulk material from tires and vehicle undercarriages before vehicles exit the proposed project site.
  - The construction contractor will cover dump trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials with tarps or other enclosures that will reduce fugitive dust emissions.

- The construction contractor will ensure that all construction and grading equipment is properly maintained.
- The construction contractor will ensure that construction personnel turn off equipment when equipment is not in use.
- The construction contractor will ensure that all vehicles and compressors utilize exhaust mufflers and engine enclosure covers (as designed by the manufacturer) at all times.
- When feasible, the construction contractor will use electric construction power for construction operations in lieu of diesel-powered generators to provide adequate power for man/material hoisting, crane, and general construction operations.
- The construction contractor will suspend heavy-equipment operations during first-stage and second-stage smog alerts.

- Noise and vibration measures:
  - The construction contractor will install sound barriers around the perimeter of the proposed project site when engaging in activities that will produce a prolonged noise exposure exceeding the ambient noise threshold of 65 dB.
  - The construction contractor will ensure that construction operations do not use impact pile drivers.
  - When feasible, for construction operations the construction contractor will use electric construction power in lieu of diesel-powered generators to provide adequate power for man/material hoisting, crane, and general construction operations.

All grading will be completed on site, and the construction contractor will reuse and keep on site the maximum amount of material. Construction will commence no earlier than 7:00 a.m. and will typically cease no later than 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. Construction work might occur on Saturdays; if week-end operations are necessary, construction will commence no earlier than 9:00 a.m. and cease no later than 6:00 p.m.

2.6 PROJECT APPROVALS

The Administrative Director of the Courts is responsible for approving the proposed project. The State of California's Public Works Board must also approve the selection and acquisition of real property for the location or expansion of State of California facilities.

The AOC must acquire the proposed site's title from the County. The County may rely on the AOC's Mitigated Negative Declaration for the fee acquisition.

The City must approve installation of the traffic signal and street connections for the proposed project.

3.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

3.1 BACKGROUND

1.	**Project title:** New Hanford Courthouse
2.	**Lead agency name and address:** Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts 2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400 Sacramento, CA 95833-3509
3.	**Contact person and phone number:** Jerome Ripperda, Environmental Analyst Phone: (916) 263-8865 Fax: (916) 263-8140 Email: Jerry.Ripperda@jud.ca.gov
4.	**Project location:** The proposed project site is located in the City of Hanford, California, along 12th Avenue between W. Lacey Boulevard, Greenfield Road, and Kings County Drive.
5.	**Project sponsor's name and address:** Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts 2860 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 400 Sacramento, CA 95833-3509
6.	**General Plan designation:** Public Facilities
7.	**Zoning:** Public Facilities
8.	**Description of proposed project: (Describe the whole action involved, including, but not limited to later phases of the proposed project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)** Refer to Section 2.5, Proposed project Characteristics.
9.	**Surrounding land uses and setting. Briefly describe the proposed project's surroundings:** The following land uses are immediately adjacent to the proposed site: North: Undeveloped land and residential properties; South: Undeveloped land due south, and commercial properties; East: Kings County Jail; and West: (beyond 12th Avenue): Residential properties.

10.	**Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)** Kings County Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below will be potentially affected by the proposed project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. Mitigation measures have been developed to reduce the following impacts to a less-than-significant level:

✓	Air Quality
✓	Noise

Mitigation measures for these issues are identified in Section 4.0.

3.3 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This section analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The issue areas evaluated in this Initial Study are:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

The environmental analysis in this section makes use of the checklist recommended by the CEQA Guidelines for the environmental review process. As a preliminary environmental assessment, this Initial Study determines whether or not potentially significant impacts exist that

warrant additional analysis and comprehensive mitigation measures to minimize the level of impact. On-site, off-site, long-term, direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts are analyzed for the construction and operation of the proposed project. This Initial Study poses questions with four possible responses for each question:

- **No Impact.** The environmental issue in question does not apply to the proposed project, and the proposed project will therefore have no environmental impact.
- **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The environmental issue in question does apply to the proposed project site, but the associated impact will be below thresholds that are considered to be significant.
- **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated.** The proposed project will have the potential to produce significant impacts with respect to the environmental issue in question. However, mitigation measures modifying the operational characteristics of the proposed project will reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project will produce significant impacts, and further analysis will be necessary to develop mitigation measures that could reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Table 3.3-1. Environmental Issues Checklist

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS – Will the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				✓
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, such as trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings, and other features?			✓	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or aesthetic quality of the site and its surroundings?			✓	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			✓	
e) Create a new source of substantial shade that will adversely affect the area?			✓	
II. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Will the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of statewide Importance?				✓
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				✓
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				✓
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓
III. AIR QUALITY – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Will the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan due to construction operations?		✓		
b) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan due to courthouse operations and maintenance?			✓	
c) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?		✓		
d) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?		✓		
e) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?		✓		
f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			✓	
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Will the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or United States Fish and Wildlife Service?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or United States Fish and Wildlife Service?				✓
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				✓
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				✓
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			✓	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				✓
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES – Will the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource as defined in § 15064.5?				✓
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			✓	
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Will the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving the rupture of a known earthquake fault.			✓	
b) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground-shaking?			✓	
c) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			✓	
d) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?			✓	
e) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			✓	
f) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving expansive soil?			✓	
g) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				✓
h) Destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			✓	
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Will the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			✓	
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Will the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, emission, or disposal or accidental release of hazardous materials?			✓	
b) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and will it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				✓
c) For a project located within an airport land-use plan, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, or within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area,?				✓
d) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			✓	
e) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?				✓
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Will the project:				
a) Construction activities violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			✓	
b) Operations violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner that will result in substantial erosion or siltation?			✓	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that will result in flooding?			✓	
e) Create or contribute runoff water that will exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			✓	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			✓	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				✓
h) Place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area that will impede or redirect flood flows?				✓
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				✓
j) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				✓
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Will the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				✓

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with any applicable land-use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				✓
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES – Will the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that will be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land-use plan?				✓
XII. NOISE – Will the project:				
a) Produce a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?		✓		
b) Produce a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			✓	
c) Expose persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			✓	
d) For a project located within an airport land-use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels or excessive private airstrip-related noise levels?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Will the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			✓	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES – Will the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities or the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives?			✓	
b) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police facilities or the need for new or physically altered police facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives?			✓	
c) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities or the need for new or physically altered school facilities in order to maintain other performance objectives?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered other public facilities or the need for new or physically altered public facilities in order to maintain performance objectives?			✓	
XV. RECREATION – Will the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility will occur or be accelerated?			✓	
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			✓	
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Will the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			✓	
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			✓	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that result in substantial safety risks?				✓

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			✓	
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			✓	
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such features?			✓	
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS				
a) Will the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project determine that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			✓	
b) Will the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable RWQCB?			✓	
c) Will the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			✓	
d) Will the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which will cause significant environmental effects?			✓	
e) Will the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			✓	
f) Will the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			✓	

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Will the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			✓	
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE – Will the project:				
a) Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			✓	
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)		✓		
c) Have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓		

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.1 AESTHETICS

The evaluation of aesthetics is based on a site visit of the proposed project area performed by ERM-West, Inc. (ERM) on 13 May 2010, aerial photographs of the site (Google, Inc., 2008), and the General Plan EIR.

The proposed project site is mapped on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Hanford, California, United States Topographic Quadrangle dated 1981 at an approximate elevation of 244 feet above mean sea level (USGS 1981). The Hanford area is flat with little topographic relief, thus there are no elevated landforms that represent an opportunity for a scenic vista. Although the Sierra Nevada Mountains are visible from most of the City, the views of the mountains as a scenic vista are diminished by distance.

The following land uses surround the proposed project site:

- North: Undeveloped land and residential properties beyond;
- South: Undeveloped land due south, and commercial properties beyond (including Lowes Home Improvement Store);
- East: Kings County Jail; and
- West: (beyond 12th Avenue): Residential properties.

Construction of the proposed three-story courthouse will result in a visual change to the surrounding landscape. The proposed courthouse will obstruct views of the Kings County Jail for the residential properties to the west and southwest. However, views of the Kings County Jail for these residential properties are partially blocked by existing walls and landscaping.

The proposed courthouse will block views of the commercial properties to the south for the residential properties to the north; however, these residential properties are far enough such that a proposed three-story courthouse will not have a significant impact on views. The proposed three-story courthouse is minimally invasive on views in developed areas.

There are no designated scenic vistas within the city limits.

a) *Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

No Impact. There are no designated scenic vistas within the city limits. The proposed project site is approximately 1 mile and 5 miles northeast of State Routes 198 and 43; respectively. According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System, these roadways are not officially designated or eligible scenic highways. Based on the above considerations, the AOC concludes that construction of the proposed three-story courthouse will not have an impact on a scenic vista.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project substantially damage scenic resources such as trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings, and other features?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site is not located within the historic commercial district of the City and no buildings are currently present on the proposed project site. As previously described, the proposed project site is graded with sparse ruderal vegetation. There are no scenic resources on the site, including natural rock outcroppings.

Therefore the construction of the proposed project will have a less-than-significant impact on scenic resources.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or aesthetic quality of the site and its surroundings?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site is a vacant lot without a noteworthy visual character. It is surrounded by undeveloped parcels and residential properties to the north; undeveloped land to the south; Kings County Jail to the east; and residential properties to the west and southwest. The proposed project design will include landscaping elements that will most likely enhance, rather than degrade the existing visual and aesthetic quality of the area. The proposed courthouse's design would be consistent with courthouse design standards, and the AOC anticipates that the proposed courthouse's features will be generally responsive to local context, geography, climate, culture, and history.

Short-term visual impacts will occur during construction activities from construction debris and construction equipment such as tractors and cranes. However, visual impacts from construction will occur for only an

approximately 24-month period, and will no longer exist after proposed project completion.

The proposed courthouse will partially obstruct views of the Kings County Jail from the upper stories of the residential properties to the west, southwest, and north, but the King's County Jail does not provide attractive visual features.

Therefore, the AOC concludes that the proposed project will not substantially degrade the existing visual character or aesthetic quality of the site's surroundings. Thus the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that will adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As previously discussed, the proposed project site is undeveloped with no existing structures. The proposed three-story courthouse will create light sources for exterior and interior building lighting on the proposed courthouse grounds that may potentially affect the residential properties to the west, and the King's County Jail to the east. However, the proposed project will adhere to the California Trial Court Facilities Standards which will ensure that the building will be appropriate to the surroundings.

The AOC will apply for a Silver Rating certification under the United States Green Building Council's LEED Green Building Rating System for the proposed project, and the AOC intends to implement a lighting plan that complies with LEED requirements. Requirements (United States Green Building Council 2003) relevant to lighting include:

- Meet or provide lower light levels and uniformity ratios than those recommended by the *Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) Lighting for Exterior Environments: An IESNA Recommended Practice* (IESNA 1999);
- Design exterior lighting such that all exterior luminaries with more than 1,000 initial lamp lumens are shielded and all luminaries with more than 3,500 initial lamp lumens meet the Full Cutoff IESNA Classification;

- The maximum candela value of all interior lighting shall fall within the building (not out through windows) and the maximum candela value of all exterior lighting shall fall within the property; and
- Any luminary within a distance of 2.5 times its mounting height from the property boundary shall have shielding such that no light from that luminary crosses the property boundary.

Most of the building's interior lighting will be limited to the Superior Court's typical weekday operational hours and the periods immediately before and after court operations. The AOC intends to shield all light sources to minimize light on surrounding properties.

Light sources are already present adjacent to the proposed project site from the street lighting. The proposed courthouse security lighting will not be substantially different from the nearby Lowes Home Improvement Store to the south of the proposed project site, and the King's County Jail to the east.

The proposed project will not add building features such as metallic finishes that generate substantial glare. Implementation of these measures and other LEED guidelines will reduce both the generation of exterior light and the potential for light trespass to affect off-site areas. Because the proposed project will comply with LEED criteria for reducing light pollution, the AOC concludes that the proposed project will not create a new source of substantial light that will adversely affect day- or night-time views in the area.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) *Will the project create a new source of substantial shade that will adversely affect the area?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Shade and shadow impacts occur when a structure reduces the amount of sunlight reaching another property. Significant shade and shadow impacts occur when a building or other structure substantially reduces natural sunlight on public open spaces, measured on winter solstice (December 21st, when the sun is lowest in the sky); the spring equinox (March 21st, when day and night are approximately equal in length); and the summer solstice (June 21st, when the sun is at its highest point in the sky).

The proposed courthouse will be set back several hundred feet from 12th Avenue, and the western portion of the proposed project will consist of landscaping and parking areas. Shadows from the proposed courthouse will likely fall on the parking lot and will not affect the residential properties to the west and north.

The proposed project site is adjacent to undeveloped land immediately to the north; undeveloped land to the south; Kings County Jail approximately 200 feet to the east; and 12th Avenue to the west. The proposed project will create shade and shadow impacts on the King's County Jail to the east. However, the impacts to the King's County Jail will not be significant because the King's County Jail structure on the east side is a high concrete wall with no windows that will be affected by shadows cast from the proposed courthouse.

The AOC concludes that implementation of the proposed project will have less-than significant shade and shadow impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

a) *Will the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?*

No Impact. The proposed project site falls within the City Planning Area. According to the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program – Kings County Important Farmland (California Department of Conservation, 2006), the City Planning Area is designated as *Urban and Built-Up Land*. Therefore, construction of the proposed project will not convert Farmland to non-agricultural use.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

No Impact. As previously discussed, in the General Plan the proposed project site is not set aside for agricultural use. In addition, the proposed project site is not identified on the *Location of Williamson Act Contract Lands*

Within the Planning Area (General Plan Figure 4.2-2). Thus the proposed project will have no impact on agricultural uses or a Williamson Act contract.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))??*

No Impact. As previously discussed, the General Plan designates the proposed project site for *Public Facilities* and not as forest land. Thus, construction of the proposed courthouse will not have an impact on forest land or timberland production.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

No Impact. As previously discussed, the proposed project site is not zoned as forest land. Therefore the proposed project will not result in the loss of forest land or convert forest land to non-forest use.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) *Will the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

No Impact. The proposed project does not involve any changes to the existing environment that could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

The proposed project site is in Kings County, which is part of the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control

District (the "Air District") has responsibility for ensuring that the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin attains and maintains compliance with federal and State ambient air quality standards. The region is currently in non-attainment with the federal 8-hour ozone, State 8-hour, and State 1-hour ozone standards, and the State annual arithmetic mean and 24-hour particulate matter smaller than 10 micrometers in aerodynamic diameter (PM_{10}) standard. The region is also in nonattainment of the federal 24-hour particulate matter smaller than 2.5 micrometers in aerodynamic diameter $PM_{2.5}$ and State $PM_{2.5}$ standards. Therefore, the proposed project site lies within a nonattainment area for several ambient air quality standards.

The area has air quality plans that address the attainment of the ozone standards (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District April 2007) and $PM_{2.5}$ (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2008) standards as well as an air quality maintenance plan for PM_{10} (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District September 2007).

The Air District uses thresholds of significance to determine if a proposed project will have a potentially significant impact on air quality within the region. In addition to PM_{10}, the Air District has thresholds of significance for reactive organic compounds, oxides of nitrogen, and carbon monoxide. These thresholds (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2002) vary by specific pollutant and proposed project activity as shown in Table 4.3-1.

Table 4.3-1. Air District Thresholds of Significance for Criteria Pollutants

Activity	**Pollutant**			
	PM_{10}	**Reactive Organic Gases (Tons/Year)**	**Nitrogen Oxides (Tons/Year)**	**Carbon Monoxide (ppm)**
Construction	Implement control measures	10	10	--
Project Operations	--	10	10	9 ppm (8-hour avg.) 20 ppm (1-hour)

The Air District lists PM_{10} as the pollutant of greatest concern during construction activities and takes a qualitative approach to the analysis of potential impacts of construction PM_{10} emissions by requiring the implementation of control measures (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution

Control District 2002). The Air District states that compliance with the Air District's Regulation VIII will constitute sufficient mitigation to reduce PM_{10} emissions to a less than significant impact (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2002). The Air District also states a requirement to contact the agency for potential nitrogen oxides analysis for large construction projects.

The receptors closest to the proposed project that may be potentially impacted by PM_{10} emissions, in the form of fugitive dust and construction equipment exhaust, are:

- Surrounding residential homes located approximately 100 feet to 320 feet from the nearest proposed project boundary;
- The Kings County Jail located approximately 50 feet from the nearest proposed project boundary;
- The Bob Hill Youth Athletic Complex located approximately 800 feet from the nearest proposed project boundary; and
- A Home Depot located approximately 850 feet from the nearest proposed project boundary.

The Air District's Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions) includes the following applicable rules to the proposed project: Rules 8011 (General Requirements), 8021 (Construction, Demolition, Excavation, Extraction and Other Earthmoving Activities), 8031 (Bulk Materials), 8041 (Carryout and Trackout), and 8071 (Unpaved Vehicle/Equipment Traffic Areas). These rules list required actions to take to mitigate fugitive dust arising from various construction activities related to the proposed project and include such measures as applying dust suppressants or water to unpaved roads, removing track out from public roadways, and using wind barriers.

In addition to Regulation VIII, the Air District has promulgated Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review) to achieve PM_{10} "emission reductions from the construction and use of development projects through design features and on-site measures" (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2005). Rule 9510 requires project proponents to develop an Air Impact Assessment of the proposed project and identify potential PM_{10} emission control measures.

a) *Will the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan due to construction?*

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. Construction of the proposed project will generate short-term emissions of ozone precursors, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} through the use of construction equipment that burns fossil fuels such as excavators, backhoes, and generators. Table 4.3-2 summarizes the estimated criteria pollutant emissions during construction. Emissions were estimated using anurban emissions software (URBEMIS 2007) that uses estimates based on the California Air Resources Board's Emission Factors (EMFAC2007) model for on-road vehicle emissions and the OFFROAD2007 model for off-road vehicle emissions. Additional details are in Appendix B.

Table 4.3-2. Proposed Project's Estimated Construction Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Year	Volatile Organic Compounds (tons/year)	Nitrogen Oxides (tons/year)	Carbon Monoxide (tons/year)	Sulfur Dixoide (tons/year)	PM_{10} (tons/year)	$PM_{2.5}$ (tons/year)
2013	0.09	0.82	0.46	0.00	0.31	0.09
2014	0.40	1.88	3.05	0.00	0.13	0.11
2015	1.69	0.77	1.21	0.00	0.07	0.04
Total Construction Emissions	2.18	3.47	4.72	0	0.51	0.24

According to the *2007 Ozone Plan, Appendix B,* ozone precursors emitted from construction equipment are included in the emission inventory that forms the basis for the air quality plan. Therefore, the proposed project's projected construction-related ozone precursor emissions will not impede attainment of the ozone standards. According to the Air District's *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, compliance with Air District Regulation VIII and implementation of indicated control measures will reduce PM_{10} impacts to a less-than-significant level during construction. In addition, as a basis of comparison, the emissions summarized on Table 4.3-2 are below the operational threshold of 10 tons per year.

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measures, as recommended in the Air District's *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts,* will reduce PM_{10} (including $PM_{2.5}$) impacts to a level that is less than significant:

AIR QUALITY 1

When weather conditions promote potential generation of fugitive dust, the AOC will control dust emissions by stabilizing all disturbed areas (including spoil piles) that are not being actively utilized for construction purposes. Construction personnel will use water applications, chemical stabilizers or suppressants, tarps, or other suitable covers or vegetative ground covers for dust control.

AIR QUALITY 2

If construction operations transport materials off the proposed project site, the AOC will ensure that all materials are covered or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions. The AOC will also ensure that transport containers have at least 6 inches of freeboard space from the top of the container.

AIR QUALITY 3

Construction personnel will install and maintain a track-out control device or utilize a carryout and track-out prevention procedure that achieves an equivalent or greater level of control. Construction personnel will remove track-out material at the end of each workday, but if track-out extends 50 or more feet from the site, then construction personnel will be immediately remove the track-out. Construction personnel will not be use dry rotary brushes unless sufficient wetting limits visible dust emissions.

AIR QUALITY 4

If construction operations carry visible soil material onto public streets, construction personnel will sweep all paved construction, parking, and staging areas daily with water sweepers.

AIR QUALITY 5

Construction personnel will limit idling of all diesel engines to less than 5 minutes unless such idling is necessary to accomplish the work for which the equipment is designed. Construction personnel will ensure that equipment is maintained properly.

AIR QUALITY 6

The Air District's Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review) requires that an air impact assessment of the proposed project be conducted consistent with the rule and mitigation measures be proposed and implemented depending on the results of the assessment. The proposed project will implement additional mitigation measures as agreed upon with the Air District.

b) *Will the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan due to courthouse operations and maintenance?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The region has air quality plans for attainment of the ozone and $PM_{2.5}$ standards and a maintenance plan for the PM_{10} standard.

As part of the proposed project, the AOC will construct a proposed courthouse upon a vacant lot. The proposed project will redirect existing traffic trips currently being generated by four separate courthouse facilities within 0.5 miles of the proposed project and by one courthouse facility in the City of Lemoore located about 7 miles from the proposed project. The Superior Court will vacate these five existing facilities, and the County will use the vacated space. The new courthouse will have three more courtrooms than are currently available, and it will also generate new traffic trips. The proposed project is conservatively estimated to produce a net change in 2,092 vehicle trips per day.

The Air District's *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* specifies that i) ozone precursors, which include nitrogen oxides and reactive organic gases, are of concern when examining operational emissions and ii) that an increase of more than 10 tons per year of ozone precursors will be considered a significant impact. As shown in Appendix B and summarized in Table 4.3-3 below, ozone precursor emissions from proposed project operations are estimated to be 4.21 tons per year, less than the 10 tons per year threshold. Therefore, the associated ozone precursors from operational sources will not significantly impede the attainment of the ozone standards and the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Table 4.3-3. Proposed Project's Estimated Operational Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Emission Source	Volatile Organic Compounds (tons/year)	Nitrogen Oxides (tons/year)	Carbon Monoxide (tons/year)	Sulfur Dioxide (tons/year)	PM_{10} (tons/year)	$PM_{2.5}$ (tons/year)
Passenger Vehicles	1.64	2.22	23.70	0.03	2.40	0.52
Natural Gas	0.01	0.18	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00
Landscape	0.01	0.00	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00
Architectural Coatings	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operational Emissions	1.81	2.40	23.99	0.03	2.40	0.52

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required. However, mitigation measure Air Quality 6 will require the implementation of additional mitigation measures agreed upon with the Air District as a result of the Air District's Rule 9510. This measure will further ensure emissions are less than significant.

c) *Will the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?*

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. Construction of the proposed project will result in short-term emissions of criteria pollutants. As stated previously in part (a) of this section, with appropriate mitigation measures, the emissions of ozone precursors, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} from construction activity will not be expected to impede the attainment or maintenance of the ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, or PM_{10} standards. Construction activities may result in a temporary increase in localized concentrations of PM_{10} (which includes $PM_{2.5}$) that may impact nearby sensitive receptors (e.g., nearby residences). PM_{10} is primarily generated through demolition and ground-disturbance activities, such as grading and vehicles traveling on paved and unpaved roads. These PM_{10} impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels by applying the mitigation measures identified in part (a). In addition, Table 4.3-2 above summarizes the construction emissions. These emissions are less than the 10 tons per year for NO_x and 10 tons per year for reactive organic gases that the Air District defines as significant. The Air District does not identify a specific threshold for CO, PM_{10}, or $PM_{2.5}$ but states particulate matter emissions will be deemed less than significant if particulate matter mitigation measures are implemented.

As indicated by the modeling described in Appendix B, after construction, the small increase in vehicle emissions is not expected to result in significant impacts to attainment of any air quality standards. As discussed in part (b) of this section, the increase in ozone precursor emissions will not significantly impact the attainment of ozone standards and will be less than the threshold of significance, identified by the Air District as 10 tons per year of ozone precursors.

At nearby intersections, the additional vehicles may increase local carbon monoxide concentrations, which are not only affected by the number of vehicles, but also by the level of congestion. Congestion at intersections can be characterized by the level of service. "Level of service" (LOS) is a qualitative description of intersection operations and is reported using an "A" through "F" rating system, with "A" indicating little or no delay and "F" indicating excessive delay. However, according to the *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (Air District), violations of the carbon monoxide standard are not expected at intersections where the level of service with the proposed project is "D" or better or where the proposed project does not substantially worsen an already existing LOS F on one or more streets or intersections in the vicinity.

As described in Section 4.16, the overall level of service is predicted to be "D"or better at the nearby intersections analyzed. Therefore, any carbon monoxide concentration increase is anticipated to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Implement mitigation measures AIR QUALITY 1 through AIR QUALITY 6.

d) *Will the project result in a cumulative considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region has a non-attainment status under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?*

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. The region currently has a non-attainment status with the federal and State ozone standards, federal and State $PM_{2.5}$ standards, and State PM_{10} standard.

As discussed in part (a), the proposed project construction emissions are estimated to be potentially significant unless mitigation measures are implemented. The Air District identifies thresholds of significance for ozone precursors, 10 tons per year, which would not be exceeded and thus are less than significant. However, the Air District does not identify thresholds of significance for $PM_{2.5}$ or PM_{10}, thus project $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}

emissions cannot be quantitatively determined as either significant or not significant. To address this gap, the Air District requires the implementation of particulate matter mitigation measures, and considers implementation of these measures to be less than significant on $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} emissions.

Given the proposed project will implement particulate matter mitigation measures as required by the Air District, cumulative increase from the proposed project construction emissions are considered to be less than significant.

As discussed in part (b), the proposed project operational emissions are expected to be less than significant because estimated operational emissions of ozone precursors will be less than the Air District's significance threshold. The Air District does not list any numerical significance thresholds for operational emissions of $PM_{2.5}$ or PM_{10}.

The Air District's CEQA thresholds account for future development and the proposed project will be consistent with the land-use designation of the Kings County General Plan. Considering the consistency with the General Plan and the proposed project's expected less-than-significant increase in emissions after adoption of mitigation measures as described in parts (a) and (b), the proposed project's cumulative impacts will be less than significant with the proposed mitigation measures described below.

Mitigation Measures: Implement mitigation measures AIR QUALITY 1 through AIR QUALITY 6.

e) Will the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. As defined by the Air District's *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, sensitive receptors pertain to "facilities that house or attract children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants." The proposed project is located near residences to the west and north that may have sensitive receptors. The AOC's particular concerns for nearby sensitive receptors are PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and carbon monoxide concentrations.

During construction, the proposed project will increase in PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations for nearby sensitive receptors. The closest sensitive receptors to the proposed project site will be a collection of residences to the west, approximately 100 feet from the site. Emissions of PM_{10} and

$PM_{2.5}$ from construction operations are estimated to be 2.40 tons per year and 0.52 tons per year, respectively. According to the *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts*, there are no numerical thresholds of significance for PM_{10} or $PM_{2.5}$; however, implementation of mitigation measures identified in part (a) above will reduce construction-related emissions to less than significant.

After the proposed courthouse is completed and operational, courthouse-related traffic might increase local carbon monoxide concentrations at nearby intersections. As discussed in parts (b) and (c), with the minimal increase in vehicles and a level of service equal to or better than D, as shown in Section 4.16, the congestion will not likely result in significant impacts to nearby sensitive receptors.

As discussed above, operational impacts will be less than significant; however, the mitigation measures below will be needed to reduce construction impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Implement mitigation measures AIR QUALITY 1 through AIR QUALITY 6.

f) Will the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. During construction, the exhaust of diesel-powered equipment may generate odors. The odors, however, will be temporary and will not significantly affect a substantial number of people. The Air District addresses potential odor impacts within "Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts" (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2002) and lists a table of facility types and distance that would trigger a potentially significant impact for odors. This table has been replicated in Table 4.3-4 below.

Table 4.3-4. Project Screening Trigger Levels for Potential Odor Sources

Type of Facility	Distance
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	2 miles
Sanitary Landfill	1 mile
Transfer Station	1 mile
Composting Facility	1 mile
Petroleum Refinery	2 miles
Asphalt Batch Plant	1 mile

Chemical Manufacturing	1 mile
Fiberglass Manufacturing	1 mile
Painting/Coating Operations (e.g. auto body shops)	1 mile
Food Processing Facility	1 mile
Feed Lot/Dairy	1 mile
Rendering Plant	1 mile

The proposed project does not fit any of the categories listed within Table 4.3-4 nor is the proposed project site within any of the listed distances of the facilities listed in Table 4.3-4.

The closest receptors of potential odors from construction equipment are the Kings County Jail located approximately 50 feet from the nearest proposed project boundary and individual homes located approximately 100 feet from the nearest proposed project boundary. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to last approximately 24 months.

Once the proposed project is constructed, the proposed courthouse will have no new significant sources of odors. Therefore, the project's construction and operational odor impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project site is undeveloped with grass cover. There are no trees and no natural stream, creek or waterway present on the proposed project site. The proposed project site is immediately surrounded by undeveloped land to the north and south, with urban development beyond; and is immediately surrounded by development to the east and west.

According to the General Plan (*Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element)*, Hanford is substantially surrounded by improved farmland and very little of the original habitat remains undisturbed around the City [City of Hanford, 2002]. The naturally occurring plant and animal species within these disturbed areas have been displaced.

The California Natural Diversity Database, maintained by the California Department of Fish and Game, provides current data on the special status (federal- and State-listed species and habitats) and sensitive biological resources that have potential for occurring in the Hanford Planning Area.

a) *Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or United States Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. A query of the California Natural Diversity Database, updated on 24 May, 2010, identified no candidate, sensitive or special status species. No special status species are known to occur on the proposed project site or in the immediate area (see Appendix D). Therefore the proposed project will have a less than significant impact on special status species.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or United States Fish and Wildlife Service?*

No Impact. There is no riparian habitat (given the lack of natural stream, creek or waterway) on the proposed project site, and all construction activity will be conducted within the property boundaries. The proposed project will not have an impact on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game and United States Fish and Wildlife Services.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

No Impact. As previously discussed, no wetlands, riparian habitat, or other sensitive natural community is on or in the vicinity of the proposed project site. Therefore the proposed project will have no impact on wetlands.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Will the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

No Impact. As previously discussed, there are no natural waterways on the proposed project site, thus the proposed project will have no impact on migratory fish. Based on a review of data obtained from a query of the California Natural Diversity Database, no wildlife nursery sites have been identified at the site or within a 0.5-mile radius of the proposed project site.

The proposed project site is immediately surrounded by undeveloped land and urban development. Because past agricultural activities have disturbed soil on the proposed project site, the site offers limited value as a wildlife foraging habitat. Also, the proposed project site's proximity to urban development reduces the potential native habitat for native and migratory wildlife species). Therefore the proposed site does not constitute a major migratory corridor for native wildlife or migratory wildlife, and the AOC concludes that the proposed project will have no impact in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) Will the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less Than Significant Impact. The City's Plan establishes goals and policies related to biological resources that are applicable to the proposed project. These include policies to protect special status plant and wildlife species, mature trees, wetlands and riparian habitat. The City does not have a tree preservation or heritage tree ordinance.

The proposed project will not conflict with General Plan policies as they relate to biological resources because: i) there are no wetlands, riparian habitat, slough remnants, nor trees on the proposed project site; and ii) past agricultural activities disturbance of soil on the proposed project site limits the site's value as a wildlife foraging habitat.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) Will the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. See Response 4.4(e) above. Furthermore, the site is not located within a Habitat Conservation Plan's area. The AOC therefore concludes that the proposed project will have no impact on a Habitat Conservation Plan.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

According to the General Plan, the City contains many physical links with its historic past. Historic sites, buildings and objects are reminders of the City's unique heritage and its place in the development of the Central Valley and the State.

Buildings of historic significance in the City are within the Historic Resources Combining District. The District covers a major portion of the older Hanford Downtown Business District and some surrounding residential areas. The proposed project site is outside the Historic Resources Combining District.

Archaeological sites provide important information about the historic activities of man, evidence of earlier cultures that once inhabited the area, and sites having spiritual or cultural significance to living Native Americans. As such, these sites are considered significant cultural resources.

The Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (the "Information Center") at California State University, Bakersfield is responsible for local management of the California Historical Resources Inventories (including archaeological and historical sites).

a) Will the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 15064.5?

No Impact. The proposed project site is a vacant lot with no structures. The site is graded and historically served as agricultural land. There are no historic structures that will be affected by the proposed project.

The Information Center conducted a record search of the Hanford area to determine if any known cultural resources were listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register, California Inventory of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, or the California State Historic Landmarks.

In a letter dated 22 June 14, 2010, the Information Center indicated that there were no recorded historical resources with the proposed project area. The AOC therefore determines that there are no historic resources on the site, and construction of the proposed courthouse will have no impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 15064.5?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As previously discussed, the proposed project site is undeveloped graded land that was historically agricultural land. According to the General Plan EIR, there is potential for archeological deposits to occur below undisturbed soil in areas that were previously agricultural land.

The Information Center conducted a search for the Hanford area to determine if any known archaeological resources exist on and in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site. In a letter dated June 14, 2010, the Information Center indicated that there were no recorded sites with the Hanford planning area. In a letter dated 22 June 14, 2010, the Information Center recommended that a field survey of the proposed project site be conducted by a qualified archaeologist to determine the presence of archeological resources.

Garcia and Associates conducted a pedestrian survey on 27 September, 2010 to identify prehistoric and/or historic archaeological sites in the study area. The results of the pedestrian survey revealed no archaeological sites were observed within the study area (See Appendix D). The AOC therefore determines that there are no historic resources on the site, and construction of the proposed courthouse will have no impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site is undeveloped, and agricultural operations heavily disturbed and graded the site. As a result, the potential for the discovery of human remains is unlikely.

The AOC has no information that indicates discovery of human remains during ground-disturbing activities is likely to occur. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the proposed project will not cause significant impacts related the disturbance of human remains. If the AOC's construction contractor encounters potential human remains during construction, the construction contractor will contact the County Coroner to comply with the procedures for the unanticipated discovery of human remains set forth in Public Resources Code section 5097.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section considers potential environmental impacts from the proposed project associated with geological conditions. Hanford is relatively free from seismic hazards (City of Hanford, 2002). The most recent seismic occurrence was in Coalinga in 1983, approximately 40 miles to the west. The nearest major active[1] or potentially active earthquake faults to the proposed project site are the San Andreas fault (located approximately 65 miles west of the proposed project site), Owens Valley fault (approximately 80 miles northeast of the City) and White Wolf fault (approximately 85 miles southeast of the City) (City of Hanford, 2002).

The greatest potential for geologic disaster in Kings County is posed by the San Andreas Fault. Research coordinated by the Southern California Earthquake Center in 1995 concluded that there is an 80 to 90 percent probability that an earthquake of magnitude (M) 7.0 or greater will hit Southern California along the San Andreas Fault before 2024.

White Wolf fault also has the potential to pose geologic hazards for Kings County. The most recent earthquakes to impact Kings County occurred 20 miles from the western border of Kings County (New Idria [magnitude

[1] An active fault is defined as having had movement at least once during the last 11,000 years.

5.4] and Coalinga in 1983 [magnitude 6.5] earthquakes in 1983 and 1983; respectively); and Kettleman Hills in 1985 (magnitude 6.1) four miles west of the Kings County border. All three of these earthquake incidents produced low level ground shaking and low local magnitude in the County.

Specific potential effects associated with faulting are discussed in the related study items below, as well as other unrelated geologic considerations.

a) *Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Surface rupture is most likely to occur along an active or potentially major fault trace. According to the United States Geological Survey (See *USGS California-Nevada Active Faults Map* (USGS 2008), the site does not lie within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zone.

Given the distance of the active faults discussed above from the proposed project site, the probability of ground rupture at the proposed project site is highly unlikely. The proposed project will not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects as a result of rupture of an earthquake fault, thus the AOC concludes that the proposed project's impact will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving strong seismic ground-shaking?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The degree of shaking an earthquake will have on the proposed project site and associated structures depends on a number of factors, such as the location of the fault, distance to the epicenter, size of the earthquake, the geology of the area, and the quality of building construction.

The potential for ground shaking (discussed in terms of the percent probability of exceeding peak ground acceleration [% g]) in Hanford in the next 50 years is considered to be 20-30% (See *Health and Safety Element*, Kings County General Plan (Kings County 2010)).

The County's General Plan includes a Seismic Safety Map which categorizes Seismic Zones by the intensity of ground motion that could be reasonably anticipated if an earthquake affected Kings County. According to the Kings County General Plan (See General Plan Figure HS-2 - *Seismic Safety Map)*, Hanford Planning Area is within Zone V1 – *Area of Least Expected Seismic Shakin*g. Within this zone, amplification of shaking will have a relatively high effect on low to medium-rise structures; however due to the distance to the closest fault, the overall effect is minimal.

Property damage and injury resulting from geologic hazards can be reduced to acceptable levels through the implementation of building construction standards. The California Building Code (CBC) sets forth seismic building standards for new construction. The new building will be constructed in accordance with applicable codes, and will improve upon the current conditions of the existing buildings it is intended to replace.

Prior to construction of the proposed courthouse, the AOC will conduct a geotechnical investigation of the site to assess the ground's capability to withstand anticipated ground-shaking and other geological hazards, and the AOC will incorporate these findings into the final building design. The proposed courthouse will to meet the California Building Code's minimum requirements to address seismic shaking and other geological hazards expected for the proposed project site. Therefore the AOC concludes that the proposed project impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving seismic-related ground failure, including subsidence or liquefaction-induced lateral spreading?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Liquefaction occurs when saturated, loose, fine-grained sediment temporarily transforms to a fluid-like state due to strong earthquake ground-shaking of Modified Mercalli intensity of VII or greater.

According to the Web Soil Survey by the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS 2009), the proposed project site is underlain by the Nord complex soil series. This soil series consists of well-drained and very fine sandy loams, or a soil that includes sands, clays and organic matter. Primary factors influencing the potential for liquefaction include

groundwater level, soil type and relative density, confining pressure as intensity and duration of ground shaking.

The potential for liquefaction decreases as groundwater depth increase, and liquefaction is considered unlikely where the ground water depth exceeds 30 feet. According to information in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report (ATC Associates 2010), groundwater depth in the vicinity of the proposed project site ranges from approximately 39 to 70 feet. Furthermore, according to the General Plan EIR, studies around Hanford have concluded that liquefaction potential is low due to the medium dense nature of soils, the distance to active faults and the relatively deep water table.

As part of the proposed project, the AOC will conduct a geotechnical investigation of the proposed project site to assess the ground's capability to withstand anticipated ground failure and other geological hazards, and the AOC will incorporate these findings into the final building design. Based on the geotechnical report's recommendations, the AOC will include design measures to meet the California Building Code's minimum requirements to address ground failure and other geological hazards expected for the proposed project site. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving landslides?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Areas that are susceptible to land sliding include steep slopes underlain by weak bedrock. The proposed project site is in a generally flat area with a 0 to 2 percent slope and no unusual geographical features (NRCS 2009).

As shown on the Kings County General Plan *California's Landslide Hazards; Incidence and Susceptibility Map* (Kings County 2010), the Hanford Planning Area has a low potential for landslides. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the proposed project will have a less than significant impact.

e) Will the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Soil erosion may occur during site preparation as a result of exposed loose soils to wind and storm water runoff. Construction of the proposed project will involve extensive site

preparation and disturbance of approximately 7 acres that will expose soils to potential erosion. As previously discussed, the proposed project site has flat terrain and is therefore less susceptible to potential soil erosion.

To minimize potential soil erosion impacts, the AOC will require its construction contractor to prepare a SWPPP, obtain Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's approval of the SWPPP, and implement and maintain the plan. The plan will include soil erosion BMPs to limit soil erosion, particularly during the excavation and grading of soil for the proposed project. In addition, the proposed project will comply with the City's storm water system requirements. Therefore, the AOC expects that potential soil erosions impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) Will the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the California Building Code (2001)?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Expansive soils are soils that swell or shrink when they absorb or lose water. This actions can cause cracking, tilting, and, occasionally, collapse of foundations or structures. Structural damage to buildings and infrastructure may also potentially occur if expansive soils are not considered in building design and during construction.

Table HS-1: *Potential Natural Hazards in Kings County,* contained in the Kings County General Plan (2010), shows that soil expansion is unlikely to occur within Kings County, has a limited spatial element, and has a negligible potential magnitude.

The AOC will conduct a geotechnical investigation of the proposed project site to assess the site's expansive soil risk and other geological hazards, and the AOC will incorporate these findings into the final building design. Based on the resulting recommendations, the AOC will include design measures to meet the California Building Code's minimum requirements for expansive soil hazards expected at the proposed project site. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the proposed project's impact will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

g) *Will the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?*

No Impact. The proposed project will not use septic tanks or alternative waste disposal systems. The City currently supplies sanitary sewer services in the area. No further analysis is required.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

h) *Will the project destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Hanford General Plan (2002), no geologic features of significance have been mapped in or around the Hanford Planning Area limits. The record search conducted by the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center did not identify unique paleontological resources. The AOC has no information that indicates discovery of a unique paleontological resource during ground-disturbing activities is likely to occur during construction. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the proposed project will not cause significant impacts related to the disturbance of a unique paleontological resource. If the AOC's construction contractor encounters potential unique paleontological resource during construction, the AOC and its construction contractor will contact appropriate authorities for assistance.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The Earth's climate is changing because human activities, primarily the combustion of fossil fuels, are altering the chemical composition of the atmosphere through the buildup of greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases allow the sun's radiation to penetrate the atmosphere and warm the Earth's surface, but do not let the infrared radiation emitted from the Earth to escape back into outer space. As a result, many parties are predicting that average global temperatures will increase.

Rising temperatures could also reduce the snowpack, which will increase the risk of water shortages. Higher temperatures along with reduced water supplies could reduce the quantity and quality of agricultural products. Global warming could also increase sea levels and coastal

storms resulting in greater risk of flooding[2]. Greenhouse gases are comprised of multiple gases with the potential to contribute to global warming differing amongst the gases. In order to compare the relative magnitude of the effect of each greenhouse gas on global warming, each greenhouse gas is compared against carbon dioxide as a reference gas and assigned a Global Warming Potential accordingly.

The greenhouse gases include the following:

- *Carbon Dioxide:* Carbon dioxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is the most widely emitted of the greenhouse gases. Natural sources include the respiration of plants, animals, and humans. Anthropogenic sources include the combustion of coal, oil, natural gas, and biomass sources. The Global Warming Potential of carbon dioxide is 1.
- *Methane:* Methane is a flammable gas that is the primary component of natural gas and is used as a fuel source for power generation, steam production, and water heating. Methane is also a byproduct of the decomposition of organic matter. The Global Warming Potential of methane is 21.
- *Perfluorocarbons:* Perfluorocarbons have stable molecular structures that have long lifetimes ranging from 10,000 and 50,000 years. The two primary industrial sources of perfluorocarbons are semiconductor manufacturing and aluminum production. Perfluorocarbons have a Global Warming Potential several thousand times that of carbon dioxide. The Global Warming Potential of perfluorocarbons range from 5,700 to 11,900.
- *Hydrofluorcarbons:* Hydrofluorocarbons are compounds formed synthetically that are used as a substitute for chlorofluorocarbons for refrigerants. The Global Warming Potential of hydrofluorocarbons range from 140 to 63,000.
- *Nitrous oxide:* Nitrous oxide, also known as laughing gas, is a colorless gas that is produced in nature by microbial processes in soil and water and anthropogenically by combustion sources and vehicle emissions. The Global Warming Potential of nitrous oxide is 310.
- *Sulfur hexafluoride:* Sulfur hexafluoride is an organic, colorless, odorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas that is used for insulation in

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[2] California Energy Commission (CEC), 2006, *Our Changing Climate Assessing the Risks to California: The 2006 Summary Report from the California Climate Change Center.*

electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in semiconductor manufacturing, the magnesium industry, and as a tracer gas for leak detection. Sulfur hexafluoride has a Global Warming Potential of 23,900.

Emissions of carbon dioxide are the leading cause of global warming, with the other pollutants such as methane, nitrous oxide, and hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride also contributing. Of these pollutants, carbon dioxide has the greatest impact on global warming, because of the relatively large quantities of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere.

a) Will the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. In 2006, the State Legislature passed Assembly Bill 32 that charged the California Air Resources Board (the "Air Resources Board") to develop regulations on how the State will address global climate change. The Air Resources Board's Scoping Plan (CARB 2008a) presented a comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon emissions in California, improve California's environment, reduce dependence on oil, diversify California's energy sources, save energy, and enhance public health while creating new jobs and enhancing the growth in California's economy.

For State agencies, the Scoping Plan emphasized the State's role of setting an example to meet improved energy standards for new State buildings. The Air Resources Board concluded that the State should set an example by requiring all new State buildings to exceed existing energy standards and meet nationally recognized building sustainability standards such as LEED Certified ratings. The Scoping Plan's requirements also stipulate that facility sites will be consistent with the State's planning priorities and regional planning processes, will promote resource-efficient development, and will support public transit. Currently, the Green Building Order signed by Governor Schwarzenegger (State of California 2004) requires new buildings to be built to the Silver or higher standard. On 17 July 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted green building standards, amending the 2007 California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24 of the CCR, Part 11.

The Air District has adopted the Climate Change Action Plan that directed the Air District's Air Pollution Control Officer to develop guidance to assist the Air District's staff, valley business, land-use agencies, and other permitting agencies in addressing greenhouse gas emissions as part of the

CEQA process. As a result, the Air District developed the Air District's *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Project under CEQA (December 17, 2009)*. The impact of the proposed project's greenhouse gas emissions on the environment as they relate to this document is discussed in part (b) below.

The AOC's proposed design will incorporate features that conform to LEED certification, which complies with the California Building Standards Commission's green building standards in the 2007 California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24 of the CCR, Part 11. Because the AOC's design requirements mandate LEED Silver measures, the proposed project is adjacent to the Kings County Jail and other County offices, and is near public transit facilities, the AOC concludes that the proposed project is consistent with the Scoping Plan's goals for State Government actions. The AOC therefore concludes that the proposed project is consistent with the State's plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and will have less-than-significant impacts on the Air Resources Board's Scoping Plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Will the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less-Than-Significant Impact The Kings County General Plan contains policies and goals focused on climate change. For example, the General Plan has a policy of working with agricultural development to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The County also has an objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the County's proportionate fair share.

Another policy contained in the Plan is to assess and mitigate proposed project greenhouse gases and climate change impacts by using methods recommended by the Air District, the County, or CARB, if any. There are currently no formally approved thresholds for measuring the significance of a project's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. However, the Air District's *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Project under CEQA (December 17, 2009)* states that a project complying with an approved greenhouse gas emission reduction plan or greenhouse gas mitigation program, implementing best performance standards, or otherwise achieving a 29 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, can be considered to have a less than significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions. At this time, Air District is in the process of

developing official best performance standards and has not approved standards for development projects.

As shown in Appendix B, construction of the proposed project will emit approximately 655 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. Operation of the proposed project will emit approximately 3,288 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per year.

Because the Judicial Council requires new courthouse designs to incorporate LEED Silver measures, the proposed courthouse will include energy-saving features and design measures to reduce energy consumption and associated greenhouse gases emissions. The proposed project will incorporate building design features that will comply with the 2007 California Green Building Code, Title 24 of the CCR, Part 11. For these reasons, effects on total greenhouse gases emissions from the proposed project will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

a) Will the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use, emission, or disposal, or accidental release of hazardous materials?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project will construct a new courthouse facility that will not require the routine transport, use, emission, or disposal of hazardous materials in construction or operational activities. The use of hazardous materials in courthouse operation will be limited to cleaning products; chemicals such as fuel, oils, and lubricants used for machinery in the building; and pesticides and herbicides that may be infrequently applied to landscaped areas. At times, hazardous materials may be required as evidence for trials; however, such evidence will be handled in accordance with court policy in order to ensure the safety of employees and the public.

As documented in the proposed project's Phase I environmental site assessment, analysts identified no evidence of past or current recognized environmental conditions at or adjacent to the proposed project site (*for example*, such as the presence of chemicals/hazardous materials in or on the proposed site's soils) (ATC Associates 2010). However, based on the site's historical agricultural use, the AOC directed a subcontractor to perform soil

sampling at the proposed project site. The purpose of this sampling was: i) to assess for the potential presence of pesticides; and ii) to support offsite disposal of soils during the construction phase. During that investigation, analysts reported minor detections of 4,4- Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethylene DDE (an Organochlorine pesticide) in some of the samples; these detections were lower than regulatory screening levels for protection of human health and the environment. Analysts also detected metals, which are naturally-occurring constituents of soils and are routinely detected in soils. With the exception of arsenic, all of the metals concentrations were lower than the regulatory screening levels. Based on the Phase II investigation findings, concentration of arsenic detected represents background levels of arsenic which are commonly detected at similar concentrations throughout the Bay Area. (Ninyo & Moore, 2010).

Site preparation and grading will result in soil disturbance and potential migration of contaminated dust. However, soil disturbance at the site will not create hazard to the public because: i) concentrations of 4, 4-DDE were detected at levels below regulatory screening levels; ii) metals detected are naturally occurring constituents of soils; iii) concentrations of arsenic are likely representative of background levels; Section 2.5.4's measures minimize generation of dust during the construction phase. The AOC concludes that impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites complied pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and will it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*

No Impact. The proposed project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites provided by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Furthermore, the site did not appear in any of the database searches conducted for the proposed project site as part of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ATC Associates, 2010). Therefore, there is no impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *For a project located within an airport land-use plan, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, or within the vicinity of a private airstrip, will the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?*

No Impact. According to *Figure 3b- Hanford Municipal Airport Compatibility Map* of the Kings County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, the proposed project site is not within the area covered by the Kings County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Kings County, 1994). Furthermore, the proposed project site is not within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport and is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The nearest airports to the proposed project site are Hanford Municipal Airport (approximately 2.5 miles southeast); Blair Strip (approximately 4.5 miles southeast); Swanson Ranch Nr 1 (approximately 5.5 miles northeast); and Stone Airstrip (approximately 8.5 miles west).

The AOC therefore concludes that the proposed project will have no air traffic safety hazard impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The City has an adopted Emergency Plan that will guide the City's activities in the case of a major emergency. Hanford's Emergency Plan does not address specific emergency situations; rather, it provides the framework for coordinating efforts throughout the City staff to provide the greatest level of assistance, guidance, and support to the community in response to a catastrophic event (City of Hanford, 2002).

The Kings County Office of Emergency Management (OEM)[3] maintains an Emergency Response Plan for the County, and is responsible for: i) organizing disaster response; ii) conducting exercises and coordinating the opening and functioning of the Emergency Operations Center in the event of a major incident or disaster, such as flood, earthquake or major fires; and iii) alerting and notifying appropriate agencies, coordinating

[3] Coordinated through the Kings County Fire Department and operated out of the County Fire Department Headquarters

responding agencies and ensuring resources are available and mobilized during times of emergencies.

According to the Kings County General Plan (See Figure HS-20 *Evacuation Routes*), 12th Avenue is one of several secondary routes that provide critical secondary passages during emergency or disaster response (Kings County, 2003). Given the size of the proposed project and the available room on the proposed project site and adjacent roadways, the proposed project will not have impacts on emergency and local vehicle access in the vicinity of the proposed project site, either during or post-construction.

Although construction operations may affect portions of the adjacent streets, construction personnel will not completely block these streets from traffic and will provide traffic control. Furthermore, given the availability of emergency services and evacuation routes in various locations around the proposed project site, emergency and local vehicles will have multiple access routes during an emergency event and will not be obstructed by the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project will not interfere with the implementation of or physically interfere with the City and Kings County Emergency Response Plans, thus the proposed project will have less than significant impact in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) *Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?*

No Impact. Wildland fires are an uncontrollable fire in combustible vegetation that occurs in the countryside or wilderness area. The threat of wildland fires resulting from either natural or manmade causes occurs in forest, brush, or grasslands in Hanford is minimal (City of Hanford General Plan, 2002). The proposed project site is in a developed area that is not near forest, brush, or grassland areas. The most likely fires in the area of the proposed project are urban fires. The proposed project therefore will have no impacts related to wildland fires.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

According to information provided in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report for the proposed project site, the site is essentially flat,

groundwater depth in the vicinity of the proposed project site ranges from approximately 39 to 70 feet, and groundwater flow direction is depicted as being toward the south-southeast (ATC Associates 2010). There are storm drain lines in 12th Avenue and in the proposed alignment of the Kings County Drive extension.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (the "Water Board") regulates waste discharges into waters of the State through the NPDES permit system. Dischargers whose projects disturb 1 or more acres must comply with the NPDES permit system by obtaining a General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity from the Water Board. Under the new General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ), which went into effect on 1 July, 2010, the AOC must submit a sediment and receiving water assessment, post-construction balance analysis, a certified SWPPP from a qualified SWPPP Developer and implement all Construction General Permit-required BMPs. After completion of construction, the AOC must submit a Notice of Termination including a certification that the AOC has met all Construction General Permit requirements.

The Municipal Storm Water Permitting Program regulates storm water discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems. Beginning in 1990, Regional Water Quality Control Boards began adopting NPDES storm water permits for medium and large municipalities. The municipal separate storm sewer systems permits require municipal dischargers to develop and implement a Storm Water Management Plan/Program to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, which is the performance standard specified in Section 402(p) of the U.S. Clean Water Act. The management programs specify BMPs that permittees will use to address certain program areas. Medium and large municipalities must also conduct chemical monitoring of discharges.

The City relies solely on groundwater for its water supply. It obtains groundwater from underground aquifers via 19 groundwater wells scattered throughout the City. The aquifer system in the City consists of an upper and lower aquifer separated by a thick clay layer referred to as the e-Clay. The upper aquifer generally consists of inter-bedded sands and clays, which contain water under unconfined or semi-confined conditions. The lower aquifer also consists of inter-bedded sands and clays, but contains water under confined conditions. Groundwater recharge in the area is primarily from stream recharge, artificial recharge and from deep percolation of applied irrigation water.

Through an agreement with the Kings County Water District, the City maintains 164 acres of ponds, basins, slough remnants, and five miles of the East branch of the Peoples Ditch for groundwater recharge.

a) *Will the project's construction activities violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site is flat and is a former agricultural area. The proposed project's construction activity will includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling or excavating.

Extensive site preparation and excavation will expose or create loose soil, and rainfall events might potentially transport sediment and potential contaminants to local waterways or the City's storm drain system. The AOC will require its construction contractor to prepare and implement a SWPPP that complies with the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ).

The proposed project's compliance with permit conditions will sufficiently protect water quality standards to make the proposed project's construction-related water quality impacts less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project's operations violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. There are municipal storm drain system inlets along the western and southern sides of the proposed courthouse parcel, and the proposed project will install storm drains to link to the municipal system. The proposed project will comply with requirements of the City's Storm Water Management Coordination Plan. To comply with water quality standards and waste discharge requirements and to avoid degradation of water quality, the proposed project will also employ BMPs such as vegetated swales and other LEED measures.

Because the City has an active Phase I municipal storm water system with an approved Storm Water Management Plan, the proposed project has no requirement to replicate the Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ)'s requirement for a pre-project water balance.

Because the proposed project's drainage facilities will link to the City's storm drain system and the proposed project will comply with requirements of the City's Storm Water Management Coordination Plan, the proposed project's operational water quality impacts will less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there will be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater level?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site is in an area that the City has designated for development rather than for groundwater recharge. The proposed project does not involve extraction of groundwater, and it will not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge so that there will be a net deficit in aquifer volume. In addition, the proposed project does not expect to include construction dewatering activities given the depth to groundwater is substantially greater than the planned 15-foot depth of excavation. The AOC therefore concludes that the proposed project's impact on groundwater recharge will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner that will result in substantial erosion or siltation?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site has flat terrain, and no water drainages or channels pass through the site. The site is also adjacent to storm drain inlets. Analysts concluded that the site's flat terrain and absence of water channels give the site a low potential for soil erosion.

The AOC will require its construction contractor to prepare a SWPPP, obtain the Water Board's approval of the plan, and implement and maintain the plan. The plan will include soil erosion BMPs to limit soil erosion and siltation. Therefore, the AOC expects that the proposed project's construction activities will not cause substantial soil erosion or siltation, and these impacts will be less than significant.

The proposed project will include LEED measures to avoid erosion and siltation during construction, and the proposed project will comply with

water quality regulations that require filtration of the storm water runoff before its release into the city's storm drain system. The proposed project will include measures such as filtering the storm water through the landscape areas or installing mechanical treatment devices on the storm drain line outfalls. Therefore, the AOC expects that the project's features will not cause substantial soil erosion or siltation, and these post-construction impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) *Will the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that will result in flooding?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As previously stated, the site is flat. The proposed project will direct runoff from the site to the City's storm drain system via existing or new storm drains. Therefore, the proposed project will alter existing drainage patterns at the site. Although the proposed project will increase the site's impervious surfaces and will increase the amount of stormwater runoff from the site, the proposed project will direct the runoff to the City's storm drain system (which has been determined to have adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed project[4]) and implement measures to ensure runoff from the proposed project is controlled. The proposed project will comply with requirements of the City's Storm Water Management Coordination Plan. The proposed project will also install BMPs and LEED measures such as vegetated swales and landscape areas to reduce the rate of runoff. The AOC therefore concludes that the proposed project will not substantially increase the rate of run-off in a manner that will result in flooding, and the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) *Will the project create or contribute runoff water that will exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project proposes to alter approximately 7 acres of undeveloped land by creating impervious

surfaces for the proposed courthouse building and parking area. Although the proposed project will substantially increase the site's impervious surfaces and will increase the amount of runoff from the site, the proposed project will not contribute runoff water that will exceed the capacity of the City's existing storm drain system[5]. The proposed project will comply with requirements of the City's Storm Water Management Coordination Plan. To comply with water quality standards and waste discharge requirements and to avoid degradation of water quality, the proposed project will also install BMPs and LEED measures such as vegetated swales and landscape areas to reduce the rate of runoff.

With implementation of the practices described above, the AOC concludes that the proposed project will have a less than significant impact on existing storm water capacity.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

g) *Will the project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?*

No Impact. Flood zone mapping conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) indicates that the proposed project site is located in a Flood Zone X. This zone is not within a 100-year flood hazard area; it is considered to be within the 500-year flood hazard area and includes areas of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2009). Furthermore, the project does not involve the construction of housing. The proposed project will therefore not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, and will have less than significant impact with regard to flood hazards.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

h) *Will the project place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area that will impede or redirect flood flows?*

No Impact. As discussed in item 4.8(g) above, the proposed project site is not located in the 100-year floodplain.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

i) Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

No Impact According to the Kings County General Plan, Pine Flat Dam is the only dam that has the potential to impact the City in the event of a dam failure. As shown on the Army Corps of Engineers Inundation Map (Kings County, 2002), should Pine Flat Dam fail while at full capacity, its floodwaters will arrive in Kings County within five hours, and may cause flooding to inhabited areas of the City. According to the Kings County General Plan (*Health and Safety Element*), the chances of Pine Flat Dam failing while at full capacity is considered remote, and so the proposed project will not create a situation that will place the public in a hazardous situation related to floods. The proposed project will not be the source of potential flooding. Thus the AOC concludes that the proposed project will have no impact on the risk of loss, injury, or death associated with flooding.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

j) Will the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact. Based on site visit observations and review of aerial photographs, the proposed project site is not near a water body that could potentially create seiche or tsunami hazards. Furthermore, given the relatively flat topography of the site and nearby properties, mudflows are not anticipated. The AOC concludes that the proposed project will have no impact on the risk of inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

4.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

As presented in the General Plan (see General Plan Figure LU-3, *General Plan Land Use Map*), the proposed project site is in an area designated as Public Facilities (PF). This designation includes schools, community parks, and storm drainage basins, and activities conducted on property owned by the County or other State, Federal or local agencies.

a) Will the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The proposed courthouse is generally consistent with the City's PF land use designation. Because the proposed project is confined to an existing, defined city parcel and the proposed project site has a non-residential land use designation, the proposed project will not divide the existing residential community. Therefore, the proposed project will have a less-than-significant impact on dividing an established community.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Will the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. Because the AOC is the proposed project's lead agency and is acting for the State of California's Judicial Council, local government land-use planning and zoning regulations do not apply to the proposed courthouse project. Nevertheless, the proposed courthouse project is consistent with the City's General Plan and the parcel's zoning classification, thus the proposed project is in compliance with local land use planning and zoning regulations adopted to mitigate environmental effects. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on other adopted plans aimed at avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

The only mineral commodities within Hanford are sand and gravel for roadway construction (City of Hanford General Plan EIR, 2002). However, there are no active mines or significant deposits of these minerals that are a major resource for the region or the residents of the State.

a) Will the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that will be of value to the region and the residents of the State?

No Impact. Given there are no significant minerals deposits within the City, construction of the proposed courthouse will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Will the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land-use plan?

No Impact. As previously discussed in Section 4.11(a), there are no significant mineral resources in the City, and the Site has not been designated as a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on local mineral resource recovery sites.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.12 NOISE

Noise is the term generally given to the "unwanted" aspects of sound. Analysts generally quantify noise in terms of decibels on the A-weighted scale (dBA). Decibels are based on the logarithmic scale. The logarithmic scale compresses the wide range in sound pressure levels to a more usable range of numbers in a manner similar to the Richter scale used to measure earthquakes. In general, a 1 dBA change in the sound pressure levels of a given sound is detectable only under laboratory conditions. A 3 dBA change in sound pressure level is considered a "just detectable" difference in most situations. A 5 dBA change is readily noticeable and a 10 dBA change is considered a doubling (or halving) of the subjective loudness. Generally, a doubling or halving of the traffic volume will produce a 3 dBA increase or decrease in the average traffic noise level. An increase of speed from 30 mph to 65 mph will produce a 10 dBA change.

For each doubling or distance from a point noise source (a stationary source, such as a loudspeaker or loading dock), the sound level will decrease by 6 dBA. For example, if a person is 100 feet from a machine, and moves to 200 feet from that source, sound levels will drop approximately 6 dBA. In terms of human response to noise, a sound 10 dBA higher than another is judged to be twice as loud; 20 dBA higher four times as loud; and so forth. Everyday sounds normally range from 30 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud).

Because noise in the environment fluctuates over time, noise is characterized by descriptors that average the sound level over the time of exposure. Some of these descriptors add "penalties" during the times of

day when intrusive sounds will be more disruptive to listeners. The most commonly-used descriptors are:

- **Day-night average sound level (Ldn).** The Ldn is a 24-hour average sound level, but, for the night hours between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., it adds 10 dBA to the average. This additional 10 dBA accounts for the tendency of people to perceive noise more loudly at night.
- **Community noise equivalent level (CNEL)**. The CNEL is similar to the Ldn, except that, in addition to the 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. 10 dBA penalty, it applies a 5 dBA penalty to noise levels occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. This descriptor is roughly equivalent in magnitude to the Ldn.
- **Equivalent sound level (Leq).** The Leq is the cumulative noise exposure from all events over a given time period.
- **Maximum sound level (Lmax).** The Lmax is the maximum sound level achieved during a single noise event.

The proposed project will be adjacent to existing residential, government, commercial and recreational uses and vacant land. Table 4.12-1 lists nearby noise-sensitive receptors and their proximity to the proposed project site.

Table 4.12-1. Location of Nearby Receptors

Noise Receptor	Address	Receptors' Approximate Distance (feet) from	
		Nearest Proposed Project Site Boundary	Proposed Courthouse Building's Site
Residential Homes	North Hartnett Place	100*	650
Residential Home	9428 12th Avenue	170*	525
Residential Homes	1012 – 1013 Pleasant Way	320*	500
Home Depot	501 North 12th Avenue	850	950
Kings County Jail	1570 Kings County Drive	50	50
Bob Hill Youth Athletic Complex	866 – 1016 Campus Drive	800	800
*=Distance is from parcel boundary to proposed courthouse parcel's boundary			

The residential homes along the east side of North Hartnett Place are two-story residences. There is an approximately 8-foot-high masonry wall along the east side of the parcels along 12th Avenue.

The City's General Plan Hazards Management Element[6] sets noise-level performance standards for new projects affected by or including non-transportation sources. The Management Element includes:

- *Program HZ 6.3-A* restricts all residential development potentially affected by airport-generated community noise to areas where outdoor noise levels are less than 65 dB CNEL and prohibits development in those areas that are greater than 65 dB CNEL except those areas that were designated for residential development prior to the adoption of the General Plan Noise Standards. For residential land uses, the daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.) exterior noise-level standard (applicable at property line) is Leq of 50 dBA and Lmax of 70 dBA.

- *POLICY HZ 6.4* requires non-transportation noise sources to provide mitigation so that emitted noise does not exceed interior and exterior noise level standards (For the daytime (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.), the City's exterior noise-level standard (applicable at property line) is Leq of 50 dBA and Lmax of 70 dBA for residential land use and an Leq of 65 dBA for playgrounds and parks). Where proposed non-transportation noise sources are likely to produce noise levels exceeding the performance standards in Table HZ-3, an acoustical analysis shall be required as part of the environmental review process so that noise mitigation may be included in the proposed project design.

- *POLICY HZ 6.8* states that the City requires monitoring of compliance with the standards of the Noise Element after completion of projects where noise mitigation measures have been required.

- *POLICY HZ 6.11* states that the City requires development projects to mitigate noise impacts associated with construction activities.

For construction noise, the AOC considers a noise impact to be significant if the proposed project will cause Ldn noise levels to exceed 75 dBA for three consecutive work days or generate noise levels in excess of construction noise standards established in the local general plan, noise

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6 Available at http://www.ci.hanford.ca.us/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=4734

ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies. For operational noise, the AOC considers a noise impact to be significant if the proposed project will cause a 5 dBA permanent increase in ambient noise levels or generate noise levels in excess of operational noise standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

a) *Will the project produce a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?*

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. The proposed project's construction operations will generate substantial noise. The activities that generate noise during the construction of a courthouse will include the following:

- Excavation of the building's basement and foundation will require operation of excavators, loaders, and trucks.
- Trenching may occur around the periphery of the proposed courthouse parcel and at the intersection of 12th Avenue/W. Liberty Street/Kings County Drive, and construction personnel may utilize jackhammers and backhoes to gain access to existing utilities and prepare alignments for new utilities.
- Foundation construction will occur in the excavated basement area. Foundation construction for the proposed project will probably utilize footings, and construction personnel will probably use backhoes for excavation of the footings.
- Assembly of the proposed project's steel frame and installation of its exterior may utilize one or more cranes. Once the construction contractor assembles the building's walls, work on the building's interior will generate only minor noise.
- Final grading of the site; construction of the Kings County Drive extension and installation of driveways, sidewalks, other hard surfaces, and landscaping will require use of backhoe tractors, tractor graders, motor graders, asphalt pavers, trucks, and concrete trucks.

Tables 14.12-2A and 14.12-2B list noise levels of construction equipment and operations that occur during construction of the proposed project. For reference, the typical noise level for a lawn mower at 50 feet is approximately 70 dBA.

Table 4.12-2A. Maximum Noise Levels of Common Construction Equipment

Noise Source	Lmax Noise Level (dBA) /a/*				
	50 Feet	100 Feet	200 Feet	400 Feet	800 Feet
Backhoe	78	72	66	60	54
Concrete mixer truck	79	73	67	61	55
Crane	81	75	69	63	57
Dozer	82	76	70	64	58
Dump Truck	84	78	72	66	60
Excavator	81	75	69	63	57
Front End Loader	79	73	67	61	55
Generator	82	76	70	64	58
Grader	85	79	73	67	61
Impact pile driver	101	95	89	86	80
Jackhammer	89	83	77	71	65
Paver	77	71	65	59	53
Pneumatic Tools	85	79	73	67	61
Roller	80	74	68	62	56
Scraper	84	78	72	66	60
Vibratory Pile Driver	101	95	89	86	80

Note: /a/ assumes a 6-dBA decline for noise generated by a "point source" and traveling over hard surfaces.
***Source** for 50-foot column: Federal Highway Administration.2006. *Roadway Construction Noise Model User's Guide*. . Noise levels for 100-foot, 200-foot, 400-foot, and 800-foot columns calculated from the assumption that dBA declines by 6 dBA with doubling of the distance between noise source and receptor.

Table 4.12-2B. Typical Outdoor Construction Noise Levels

Construction Phase	Noise Level (dBA)*				
	50 Feet	100 Feet	200 Feet	400 Feet	800 Feet
Grading/excavation	86	80	74	68	62
Foundations	77	71	65	59	53
Structural	83	77	71	65	59
Finishing	86	82	76	70	64

***Source**: City of Los Angeles. 2003. L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide. Los Angeles, CA for 50 feet and 100 feet columns. Noise levels for 100-foot, 200-foot, 400-foot, and 800-foot columns calculated from the assumption that dBA declines by 6 dBA with doubling of the distance between noise source and receptor.

Overall, the construction activities produce maximum short-term noise level increases ranging from 77 to 89 dBA at 50 feet. As summarized

below and in Table 4.12-3, impacts will vary between receptors and construction locations as follows:

Table 4.12-3. Construction Noise Levels for Nearby Receptors

Noise Receptor	**Projected Noise Levels (dBA) From Construction Activities**	
	Construction of Proposed Courthouse Building	**Construction of Proposed Parking Lot and Extension of Kings County Drive**
Residential Homes along North Hartnett	Less than 64	Approximately 69-76 for construction operations on the western portion of the proposed parcel, and less than 69 in other areas.
Residential Home at 9428 12th Avenue	Less than 66	Approximately 68-74
Residential Homes at 1012 – 1013 Pleasant Way	Less than 66	Approximately 68-74
Home Depot	Less than 63	Less than 64
Kings County Jail	77-86	Less than 80
Bob Hill Youth Athletic Complex	Less than 63	Less than 64

- For residences along North Hartnett, the proposed project's grading operations along 12th Avenue will be approximately 100 feet from the residences' eastern property line and will generate noise of up to 79 dBA at the property line. However, the residences have an approximately 8-foot high wall along the property line, and the residences are approximately 50 feet west of the retaining wall. At a distance of 150 feet, noise emitted from a grader will have a sound level of 75 dBA[7]. Construction of parking spaces in areas that are less

[7] Calculated using distance equation in Chapter 6.3.1 of FTA 2006.
Leq (distance) = Leq (at 50 feet) – 20 log (distance/50) – 10 G log (distance/50).

than approximately 130 feet from the property line will generate noise of approximately 76 dBA at the wall on the properties' eastern edge and 74 dBA at the residences' eastern wall. The wall will act as a sound barrier and can expect to reduce construction noise by at least 3 dBA. The reduced noise level combined with the fact that construction will occur only during the day will result in day-night noise levels being 75 dBA or less, below the significance threshold. Noise impacts of grading operations that are more than approximately 130 feet from the property line will be less than significant. Noise impacts of grading/excavation operations that will be less than approximately 130 feet from the North Hartnett residences' 12th Avenue property line will be potentially significant.

- For residences along North Hartnett, the proposed project's excavation, foundation, structural, and finishing operations will be approximately 600 feet to 700 feet from the residences' eastern property line. These operations will generate noise of less than 65 dBA, and the impacts will be less than significant.
- For the 12th Avenue residence, the proposed project site's northern edge near 12th Avenue will be approximately 175 feet from the residence's southern property line and approximately 190 feet from the residence's southernmost structure. The proposed project's grading operations along the proposed courthouse parcel's northern property line will generate noise of up to 74 dBA at the residence's property line, but grading operations 5 feet south of the proposed courthouse parcel's northern property line will generate noise of up to 75 dBA at the residence's property line. Because grading operations will generate noise of 75 dBA or more in only a small area of operations and the noise impacts will be less than the 75 dBA threshold, the AOC concludes that noise impacts to the residence will be less than significant.
- For the 12th Avenue residence, the proposed project's excavation, foundation, structural, and finishing operations will be approximately 525 feet to 700 feet from the residences' eastern property line. These operations will generate noise of 66 dBA or less, and the impacts will be less than significant.
- For the Pleasant Way residences, the proposed project site's northern edge will be only approximately 300 feet from the residences' southern property. The proposed project's grading operations along the

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G = ground-effects factor which is assumed to be zero due to flat terrain.

proposed courthouse parcel's northern property line will generate noise of up to 69 dBA at the residence's property line, but grading operations 5 feet south of the proposed courthouse parcel's northern property line will generate noise of up to 64 dBA at the residence's property line. Since grading operations will generate noise less than the 75 dBA threshold, the AOC concludes that noise impacts to the residence will be less than significant.

- For the Pleasant Way residences, the proposed project's excavation, foundation, structural, and finishing operations will be approximately 450 feet or more from the residences' eastern property line. These operations will generate noise of 70 dBA or less, and the impacts will be less than significant.
- For the Kings County Jail, the proposed courthouse parcel's western edge will be approximately 50 feet from the King's County Jail's western wall. The proposed project's excavation, foundation, structural, and finishing operations along the proposed courthouse parcel's northern property line will generate noise of up to 89 dBA at the King's County Jail's western wall. Because the concrete walls reduce sound transmission by over 30 dBA and safety glass reduces sound transmission by over 20 dBA,[8] the proposed project's grading and excavation noise impacts to detainees inside the King's County Jail will be less than the 75 dBA threshold (day-night noise level), and the AOC concludes that noise impacts to the residence will be less than significant.
- For persons at the Home Depot and Bob Hill Youth Athletic Complex, the proposed project's excavation, foundation, structural, and finishing operations will be over 700 feet or more from the receptors. The proposed project's construction operations will generate noise of 66 dBA or less, and the noise impacts will be less than significant.

To control noise generated by construction activities, the proposed project will include features as listed in Section 2.5.3. These include using electric construction power instead of diesel-powered generators to provide adequate power for man/material hoisting, crane, and general construction operations and avoiding use of impact pile drivers. The project's grading/excavation operations along 12th Avenue will generate

[8] CALTRANS. 2009. Technical Noise Supplement. Available at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/noise/pub/tens_complete.pdf

potentially significant noise levels, but implementation of Noise Mitigation Measures 1, 2, and 3 will reduce these impacts to a level that is less than significant. Impacts of the proposed project's other construction activities will be less than significant and will not require mitigation.

Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation measures will reduce potentially significant construction noise impacts to less-than-significant levels:

NOISE 1

> Restrict construction activities to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., from Monday through Saturday.

NOISE 2

> Ensure all construction equipment is properly maintained and operated and equipped with mufflers.

NOISE 3

> During the times when the AOC's construction contractor is grading or excavating (not including trenching operations) within 130 feet from the North Hartnett residences' 12th Avenue property line, the AOC's construction contractor will install and maintain an 8-foot-tall plywood sound barrier along 12th Avenue from the parcel's northern property line to the edge of the northern curb of the Kings County Drive extension where the extension connects with 12th Avenue.

b) *Will the project produce a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Courthouse operation will generate noise primarily from increased vehicular traffic arriving and departing the site. In addition, the heating and ventilation system of the proposed courthouse will also generate noise, though such noise is not expected to affect offsite receptors.

The Kings County General Plan specifies noise standards. In particular, the Kings County General Plan identifies acceptable new development affected by transportation sources depending on land use and noise levels as shown on Table 4.12-3. While the General Plan uses these standards to

control impacts to new development, these standards are used in this analysis to assess the impact to nearby existing receptors from increased traffic. The nearest receptors likely impacted by increased traffic will be the residential receptors along 12th Avenue, which are immediately west of the proposed site. Using Table 4.12-4, impact to these receptors may be significant if noise levels reach 60 dBA CNEL.

Table 4.12-4. Noise Standards for New Uses Affected by Transportation Sources

New Land Use	Sensitive Outdoor Area - CNEL	Sensitive Indoor Area – CNEL
Residential	60	45
Residences in Ag. Zones	65	45
Transient Lodging	65	45
Hospitals & Nursing Homes	60	45
Theaters & Auditoriums	-	35
Churches, Meeting Halls	60	40
Schools, Libraries, etc.	60	40
Office Buildings	65	45
Commercial Buildings	65	50
Playgrounds, Parks, etc.	70	-
Industry	65	50

SOURCE: Kings County Board of Supervisors. January 2010. *2035 Kings County General Plan: Noise Element.*

Appendix F contains a summary of noise measurements collected on 9 June 2010 at the proposed project site to characterize the existing noise levels near this roadway. The monitor was located 110 feet from 12th Avenue, across the street from the residential homes. The measured CNEL was approximately 65 dBA at this location. The major contributor to noise in the area is vehicles traveling on the nearby roadways, specifically 12th Avenue. Based on these measured noise levels on the proposed property, existing noise levels[9] at the nearest residential receptors along 12th Avenue are estimated to already exceed the 60 dBA CNEL threshold specified in Table 4.12-4 for land designated for residential uses but falls within acceptable levels for land designated for transient lodging such as nearby the Kings County Jail.

[9] Extrapolated from noise measurements taken on-site.

The proposed project will add to the existing noise levels by producing a small increase in nearby traffic. The increase will originate primarily from passenger vehicles that do not generate as much noise as large transport trucks. Also, these vehicles will likely travel to and from the site during limited times of the day. Most of the arriving vehicles associated with redevelopment conditions (i.e., after courthouse construction) will come during the peak morning traffic hour. These vehicles are expected to leave gradually throughout the afternoon. The traffic assessment discussed in Section 4.16 identifies 2,092 new daily trips (one-way) will be generated by the proposed project. Using the results from the traffic assessment, conservative noise estimates can be made using following assumptions:

- 100 percent of the new vehicles trips are passenger cars traveling on the same roadway;
- All vehicles are traveling at the posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour (mph); and
- Existing noise levels at nearby residences are 65 dBA.

Based on these assumptions, the noise day-night noise level at about 50 feet from the roadway will increase by less than 2 dBA due to the increase traffic resulting from the proposed project. While the existing noise levels may already exceed the threshold specified in Table 4.12-4, an increase of 2 dBA as a result of the proposed project will not be noticeable. Therefore, the impact to these residential receptors from new traffic generated by the proposed will be less than significant.

While the focus on this assessment is the effects to nearby sensitive receptors from increased traffic, to evaluate consistency with the General Plan which also considers impacts to new development, the analysis looked at the impacts to users of the proposed courthouse from increased traffic. In Table 4.12-4, an acceptable noise exposure to a new courthouse is not specifically identified. However, the most similar land use to the proposed project will be the "Office Buildings," where normally acceptable outdoor noise exposure to a proposed project is 65 dBA or less.

As described previously, the measured CNEL was approximately 65 dBA at the proposed property, about 110 feet from 12th Avenue. Noise levels will be even higher on portions of the property that are closer to 12th Avenue. Therefore, portions of the proposed project site may experience noise levels that exceed the outdoor noise standards listed in Table 4.12-4 based alone on existing traffic levels. The proposed project will increase

traffic and noise levels above the existing levels. However, as discussed previously, the increase will not be appreciable. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the impacts will be less than significant.

In addition to the above land-use compatibility noise thresholds for transportation noise sources, the General Plan lists standards for proposed projects that are affected by or create non-transportation noise, dependent upon receiving land use as shown in Table 4.12-5.

Table 4.12-5. Non-Transportation Noise Standards

Average (Leq)/ Maximum (Lmax)			
	Outdoor Area		Interior
Receiving Land Use	Daytime	Nighttime	Day & Night
All Residential	55 / 75	50 / 70	35 / 55
Transient Lodging	55 / 75	-	35 / 55
Hospitals & Nursing Homes	55 / 75	-	35 / 55
Theaters & Auditoriums	-	-	30 / 50
Churches, Meeting Halls, Schools, Libraries, etc.	55 / 75	-	35 / 60
Office Buildings	60 / 75	-	45 / 65
Commercial Buildings	55 / 75	-	45 / 65
Playgrounds, Parks, etc.	65 / 75	-	-
Industry	60 / 80	-	50 / 70
Notes: The standards shall be reduced by 5 dB for sounds consisting primarily of speech or music, and for recurring impulsive sounds. If the existing ambient noise level exceeds the standards of [this table], then the noise level standards shall be increased by 5 dB increments to encompass the ambient.			

SOURCE: Kings County Board of Supervisors. January 2010. *2035 Kings County General Plan: Noise Element.*

An acceptable noise exposure applicable to a new courthouse is not specifically identified in Table 4.12-5. However, the land use most similar to the proposed project will be "Office Buildings," where normally acceptable exterior noise exposure is 60 dB or less and interior noise exposure is 45 dB or less. Operation of the proposed project's mechanical systems of the new buildings will generate noise during daytime operations. Noise levels from just mechanical systems of a building are typically between 50 and 60 dBA at 50 feet. Because the building will be 500 feet or more from nearby residences, the building's mechanical noise will be less than 30 dBA to 40dBA at the nearby residences. Typical buildings reduce interior noise levels by 25 dBA compared to outdoor noise levels, and the building design will incorporate noise measures to ensure that the noise level of interior spaces within the proposed project

falls below 45 dB. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project expose persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. During construction, groundborne vibration and noise may be generated by large trucks and other heavy equipment during grading and construction of buildings. Generally, the groundborne vibration and noise will have a minimal impact on nearby sensitive receptors; however, during some phases of construction, nearby sensitive receptors may notice groundborne vibration. The vibration will cease when construction is complete. While the primary concern from construction activities associated with vibration is the potential damage to structures, construction activities can also be a source of annoyance for nearby noise-sensitive receptors.

The Federal Transit Authority publishes an assessment of the typical vibration levels from common construction equipment as shown in Table 4.12-6. As shown in this table, pile-driving activities have the highest associated vibration level compared to the other construction-related activities, but the proposed courthouse's three-story height will not require use of pile drivers for the project's foundation.

Table 4.12-6. Vibration Velocities for Construction Equipment

Equipment		Vibration Level						
		25 Feet	**50 Feet**	**100 Feet**	**150 Feet**	**200 Feet**	**300 Feet**	**400 Feet**
Pile-driving (Impact)	PPV	0.644	0.228	0.081	0.044	0.028	0.015	0.010
	VdB	104	95	86	81	77	72	68
Large bulldozer	PPV	0.089	0.031	0.011	0.006	0.004	0.002	0.001
	VdB	87	78	69	64	60	55	51
Loaded trucks	PPV	0.076	0.027	0.010	0.005	0.003	0.002	0.001
	VdB	86	77	68	63	59	54	50
Jackhammer	PPV	0.035	0.012	0.004	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.001
	VdB	79	70	61	56	52	47	43
PPV= Inches/Second; VdB = Vibration decibels								

SOURCE: Federal Transit Authority. May 2006. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*.

For evaluation of vibration impacts, the vibration level associated with large bulldozers and loaded trucks was used for determining potential maximum proposed project vibrations impacts at the nearby receptors. Vibration levels at distances other than those shown in Table 4.12-6 can be calculated using the equation 4.12-1, shown below, taken from the Federal Transit Authority *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*:

Eq. 14.12-1 $L_v(D) = L_v(25\text{ ft}) - 30\log(D/25)$

As shown in Table 4.12-1, the distance of nearby receptors to the proposed project varies between 50 feet (King's County Jail) to 850 feet which corresponds to a range of vibrations levels of approximately 41 to 78 Vibration decibels, using a reference level of 87 VdB for bulldozer activities at distances of 25 feet. The Federal Transit Authority publishes the acceptable vibration impact levels for various categories of land use and vibration frequency as shown in Table 4.12-7.

Table 4.12-7. Groundborne Vibration Impact Levels for Annoyance

Land Use Category	**Acceptable Ground Bourne Vibration Levels (VdB re 1 micro-inch/sec)**		
	Frequent Events[1]	Occasional Events[2]	Infrequent Events[3]
Category 1: Buildings where vibration will interfere with interior operations.	65 [4]	65 [4]	65 [4]
Category 2: Residences and buildings where people normally sleep.	72	75	80
Category 3: Institutional land uses with primarily daytime use.	75	78	83

Notes:

1. "Frequent Events" are defined as more than 70 vibration events of the same source per day.
2. "Occasional Events" are defined as between 30 and 70 vibration events of the same source per day. Most commuter trunk lines have this many operations.
3. "Infrequent Events" are defined as fewer than 30 vibration events of the same kind per day. This category includes most commuter rail branch lines.
4. This criterion limit is based on levels that are acceptable for most moderately sensitive equipment such as optical microscopes. Vibration-sensitive manufacturing or research will require detailed evaluation to define the acceptable vibration levels. Ensuring lower vibration levels in a building often requires special design of the HVAC systems and stiffened floors.

SOURCE: Federal Transit Authority. May 2006. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*.

The nearby receptors will be classified as Categories 2 and 3. As shown in Table 4.12-1, the nearest Category 2 building, the Kings County Jail, will be located approximately 50 feet from the proposed project's building site. Use of a large bulldozer within approximately 50 feet of the Kings County Jail will generate a vibration level of 78 VdB, which is within the acceptable annoyance thresholds listed in Table 4.12-7. If the nearby Home Depot (about 850 feet away) was conservatively treated as the nearest Category 3 land use, the bulldozer operating on site will generate a vibration level of 41 VdB at the Home Depot only during the day, which will be within the acceptable thresholds for Category 3 uses. Because grading and excavation operations will not occur at night, these vibration levels will not occur at night.

In addition to vibration-related annoyance thresholds, the Federal Transit Authority lists vibration-related damage thresholds as shown below in Table 4.12-8.

Table 4.12-8. Construction Vibration Damage Thresholds

Building Category	**Approximate vibration velocity level (L_v*)**
I. Reinforced-concrete, steel or timber (no plaster)	102
II. Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	98
III. Non-engineered timber and masonry buildings	94
IV. Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	90
* RMS velocity in decibels (VdB) re 1 micro-inch/second	

As previously discussed, the proposed project will not use pile drivers for construction operations, and therefore the highest vibration level perceived at a nearby receptor from a large bulldozer will be approximately 78 VdB, which is below the thresholds for building categories in Table 4.12-8 that surround the proposed site. The AOC therefore concludes that construction vibration damage impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) For a project located within an airport land-use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, will the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels or excessive private airstrip-related noise levels?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project is not located within an area covered by the airport land use plan, and is not within two miles of an airport. However, the Kings County General Plan states that new development proposals that may be affected by aircraft noise shall be evaluated relative to the noise level standards contained in the County's "Noise Standards for New Uses Affected by Transportation Noise Sources", listed in Table 4.12-4 above. As shown in Table 4.12-4, the noise standard for "Office Buildings", the category closest in description to a court house, is 65 dB CNEL. The Hanford Municipal Airport, a public use airport, is located approximately 2.2 miles southeast of the proposed project site. The Hanford City Council adopted the Hanford Municipal Airport Master Plan on 19 January 2010. The Hanford Municipal Airport Master Plan contains noise contours even for areas outside of the Master Plan boundary. Based on these contours, the proposed project site will experience noise levels from airport activities that are less than 65 dBA CNEL. Therefore, noise impacts from airport activities on the proposed project site are expected to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

a) Will the project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed courthouse will replace five existing court facilities in Kings County and consolidate the Superior Court's currently dispersed courtrooms and administrative facilities into the proposed courthouse.

Staff at the new facility will be transferred from Buildings A, B and C and the Probation Building at the Kings County Government Center in Hanford, and from the Lemoore Courthouse in the City of Lemoore. Due to relocation of the court's staff (as opposed to hiring of new staff) and the relatively low number of court employees involved (166), the proposed project will not induce substantial population growth or result in a

significant increase in employment. In addition, the existing court-related businesses will continue to serve the proposed courthouse staff and visitor population. Therefore, the potential impact on population growth is less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

No Impact. The proposed project involves construction of a courthouse on a single parcel that currently consists of vacant, graded land with minimal improvements. There are no residential buildings on the site; therefore, there will be no displacement of existing housing occurring from development of the proposed project site.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

No Impact. See Response 4.12(b).

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

a) *Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire facilities or the need for new or physically altered fire facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Fire safety in the City is provided by the Fire Department. A five-minute response time is desirable for the Hanford Fire Department (City of Hanford, 2002). The 2002 General Plan Land Use Element considered positioning two additional fire stations in the center of growth areas in order to maintain the five-minute response time required by the Hanford Fire Department.

The Hanford Fire Department Station (located at 315 North Douty Street, approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the proposed project site), currently

services the existing Hanford court facilities and will serve the proposed project site.

As previously discussed, the proposed project will replace existing court facilities and consolidate the Superior Court's currently dispersed courtrooms and administrative facilities in the Cities of Hanford and Lemoore. The consolidation of court services to and within Hanford will not result in a significant increase in demand for fire services or require additional facilities for the Hanford Fire Department to maintain adequate levels of fire protection and emergency response at the proposed project site.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police facilities or the need for new or physically altered police facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The Kings County Sheriff's Department currently serves the existing Hanford court facilities and will serve the new courthouse.

The new courthouse will have enhanced courthouse security features (as compared to the existing facilities) for its secured detainee walkway from the King's County Jail, in-custody detainee holding area, detainee access corridors, and public screening area. The proposed project will not rely on the City Police Department staff for day to day security, thus it will not impact the demand for or availability of police protection services. The proposed project will therefore have a less-than-significant impact on police services or facilities.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities or the need for new or physically altered school facilities in order to maintain other performance objectives?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project will construct and operate a new courthouse facility. Residential development is not a part of the proposed project and there are no residences currently on the parcel. Although the proposed project will relocate operations of the Lemoore Courthouse (one courtroom) from the City of Lemoore,

approximately 7 miles from the proposed project site, the AOC does not anticipate an increase in the number of residents in the surrounding area.

As such, the proposed project will not create a change in needed school services based on increases or decreases in the number of residents on the parcel or in the vicinity. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts on the demand for school facilities will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered other public facilities or the need for new or physically altered public facilities in order to maintain performance objectives?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project will construct and operate a new courthouse that will replace the existing court facilities currently serving the Hanford and Lemoore areas. The proposed courthouse will combine the services currently being provided by the existing facilities, and is expected to be a more efficient use of resources. The proposed project will not produce a substantial increase in population or jobs. Therefore, the proposed project will not substantially increase the need for new or modified public facilities or agencies and the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15 RECREATION

The City adopted a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in the year 2000. This plan defines the parks and recreation needs of the City and identifies programs that can be implemented to address those needs. The City, through the Recreation Department and Parks Division operates and maintains 18 neighborhood parks, and joint use facility sports fields. Each individual park site contains various types of facilities that are based on the needs of the residents served by the park, park size and geographic characteristics.

a) *Will the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility will occur or be accelerated?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As previously discussed, the proposed project site consists of a single vacant, graded parcel with minimal improvements. The nearest recreational facility (The Bob Hill Youth Athletic Complex) is located approximately a quarter-mile to the east of the proposed project site. However, due to its designation as a youth and special use only facility, the recreational facility will not see an increase in usage as a result of the proposed courthouse.

The nearest public park, Lacey Park is located approximately one and a half miles east of the proposed project site. Given the distance of the park to the proposed project site, the AOC does not anticipate an increase in use of the park due to courthouse employees and visitors. As noted above, the proposed project will not increase the local population, and therefore will not increase demand for local recreation opportunities. Therefore, the AOC concludes that the impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As discussed in the Response to 4.14(a) above, the proposed project site does not include a recreational facility nor will the proposed project require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, potential impacts associated with construction or expansion of recreational facilities will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Regional Access and Circulation Routes

The State Route 198 freeway provides regional east-west access to Hanford. It extends between the U.S. 101 Freeway in Monterey County,

easterly to the I-5 freeway. In the vicinity of 11th and 12th avenues, State Route 198 is a four-lane controlled access facility.

The main local access routes within the proposed project area include:

- ***Lacey Boulevard*** is the major east-west arterial route through Hanford. It extends from areas north of Lemoore, east through the 12th Avenue intersection in west Hanford to Irwin Street in downtown Hanford. At its intersection with 12th Avenue, Lacey Boulevard has two through lanes and left and right turn lanes on all approaches, with the exception of the westbound approach, where there are three through lanes. Within the study area, Lacey Boulevard has signalized intersections with the north-south streets included in this analysis. Primary access to the Kings County Government Center and existing Superior Court facilities in Hanford is via Lacey Boulevard at Kings County Drive, Campus Drive, and Mather Drive[10].

- ***12th Avenue*** is a north-south, two- to four-lane arterial roadway serving western Hanford. It extends through the city, reaching north and south of the Hanford city limits. 12th Avenue has a full diamond interchange with the S.R. 198 freeway, with signals at the eastbound and westbound ramp intersections. Within the study area, 12th Avenue also has signalized intersections with Grangeville Boulevard, Centennial Plaza Shopping Center, Lacey Boulevard and Mall Drive. It is uncontrolled at the side street stop sign controlled intersection with Liberty Street. 12th Avenue has single through lanes between Grangeville Boulevard and Liberty Street, and four through lanes (two through lanes in each direction) through its intersections with Centennial Plaza Shopping Center, Lacey Boulevard and Mall Drive. The city has planned and funded improvements for widening 12th Avenue to four lanes (two through lanes in each direction) north of the Centennial Plaza Shopping Center intersection, scheduled for completion by early 2015.

- ***11th Avenue*** is a north-south, two- to four-lane arterial roadway serving western Hanford. It has four lanes between Ivy Street and Hume Avenue. 11th Avenue has a partial interchange with the S.R. 198 freeway, with signals at the eastbound on-ramp and the westbound

[10] A primary entrance to the Kings County Government Center located between Kings County Drive and Campus Drive.

off-ramp intersections. Within the study area, 11th Avenue has signalized intersections with Lacey Boulevard, 7th Street, 4th Street and 3rd Street.

- ***Grangeville Boulevard*** is an east-west, two- to five-lane arterial street extending east from Grangeville Boulevard Bypass north of the Lemoore Naval Air Station, to just west of State Route 99 where the road name changes to Avenue 304. Grangeville Boulevard intersects 12th Avenue about one mile north of Lacey Boulevard. Its signalized intersection with 12th Avenue has separate left and right turn lanes on all approaches and two through lanes on the eastbound intersection approach.

- ***Greenfield Avenue*** is currently a discontinuous two-lane, east-west, and north-south street. One segment of Greenfield Avenue, located east of 12th Avenue in the vicinity of Fitzgerald Lane, is not yet connected. However, by early 2015 this roadway will be continuous between Lacey Boulevard (east of Campus Drive), extending north, then west through the Campus Drive intersection, through a signalized intersection with 12th Avenue, extending east to terminate at a "tee" intersection with Centennial Drive. This roadway provides access to the Hanford Town Shopping Center, Hanford's Youth Athletic Complex, and an Elm Street connection with 11th Avenue. The roadway will provide a future, alternative route to and from 12th Avenue and Centennial Drive, near the High School, relieving Lacey Boulevard and other existing routes of some of the existing peak hour traffic volume.

- ***Liberty Street*** is an east-west, two-lane roadway providing access to residences located west of 12th Avenue. It extends between "tee" intersections with 12th Avenue and Centennial Drive.

- ***Kings County Drive*** is a north-south, two-lane street serving the Kings County Government Center, north of Lacey Boulevard. Kings County Drive currently terminates at the new Kings County Jail, located north of the Government Center, and directly east (adjacent) to the proposed project site.

- ***Mall Drive*** is a two-lane collector street in western Hanford serving the Hanford Mall Shopping Center and the new Walmart and Target centers fronting 12th Avenue. Mall Drive forms the northbound approach to the Kings County Drive/ Lacey Boulevard signalized intersection.

- ***West 7th Street*** is an east-west, two-lane arterial street serving the newly constructed Hanford Community Medical Center and a variety of other office, medical and commercial uses. It extends east between a stop sign controlled "tee" intersection with Mall Drive, through a signalized intersection with 11th Avenue, extending northeast to terminate at 10th Avenue.

- ***Campus Drive*** is a north-south, two-lane street providing access to public educational and institutional uses located just east of the Kings County Government Center and north of Lacey Boulevard. It extends north from West 7th Street to its terminus at Westwood Drive in residential areas north of Greenfield Avenue.

- ***Centennial Drive*** is a north-south, two-lane collector roadway providing access to residences and the high school athletic facilities in west Hanford. It extends between a connection with Mall Drive south of Lacey Boulevard, through an intersection with Lacey Boulevard, to residential areas north of Grangeville Boulevard.

- ***West 3rd Street and West 4th Street*** are two-lane streets that form a couplet, with 3rd Street carrying eastbound traffic and 4th Street carrying westbound traffic. They provide direct connections with the eastbound off, and westbound on ramps to the S.R. 198 freeway.

- ***West 5th Street*** is an east-west, two-lane roadway that extends from just west of 11th Avenue to just east of 10th Avenue. It provides access to industrial, manufacturing, automotive and other mixed uses.

The assumptions employed in the traffic study modeling are included in Appendix F.

Existing and Future Base Case (Early Year without 2015- Proposed Project) Traffic Volumes

Analysts conducted weekday traffic counts in late May 2010 from 7:00 – 9:00 AM at the following intersections:

1. Grangeville Boulevard/ 12th /Avenue

2. Greenfield Avenue/ 12th Avenue

3. Liberty Street/ 12th Avenue

4. Centennial Plaza Driveway/ 12th Avenue

5. Lacey Boulevard/ 12th Avenue
6. Mall Drive/ 12th Avenue
7. Westbound S.R.198 Ramps/ 12th Avenue
8. Eastbound S.R.198 Ramps/ 12th Avenue
9. Lacey Boulevard/ Centennial Drive
10. Lacey Boulevard/ Kings County Drive/ Mall Drive
11. Mall Drive/ 7th Street
12. Lacey Boulevard/ Campus Drive
13. Campus Drive/ 7th Street
14. Lacey Boulevard/ 11th Avenue
15. 7th Street/ 11th Avenue
16. 5th Street/ 11th Avenue
17. 4th Street/ 11th Avenue
18. 3rd Street/ 11th Avenue

The proposed project's extension of Kings County Drive and the addition of a traffic signal at the 12th Avenue/Liberty Street/Kings County Drive extension intersection will provide the primary access to the proposed project site. The extension also provides an alternative route to the vicinity of the Kings County Government Center and a connection to Lacey Boulevard.

Future Case (2015- with Proposed Project) Traffic Volumes

Because most judicial facilities end daily sessions prior to the weekday ambient PM peak traffic hour, court-related traffic volumes are far less during the ambient PM peak hour than during the ambient AM peak hour. For this reason, the AOC's focus for the traffic analysis is on the weekday AM peak hour when staff, prospective jurors, and others are arriving at court facilities. The court's morning peak traffic hour (associated with start of court activity and support services, arrival of prospective jurors and others seeking court services) coincides with the morning ambient peak traffic commute hour (7:30 – 8:30).

As stated in Section 2.5.3, the AOC expects the new courthouse to open in 2015. Using the 2010 traffic counts, the AOC's analysts developed Year 2015 Base Case (without proposed project) traffic projections for the

eighteen analyzed intersections for the AM peak hour analysis time period. Analysts used growth in traffic due to approved development projects (listed in Appendix F, Table 2) as well as an overall growth rate (slightly less than 1% per year,) to predict year 2015 conditions. Roadway improvements that might be constructed by 2015 include 12th Avenue widening, improvements at the Mall Drive/ 7th Street intersection, and the extension of Greenfield Avenue. [11] The AOC's proposed project includes extension of Kings County Drive to the 12th Avenue/Liberty Street intersection. Appendix F provides additional information on the AOC's analyses.

a) *Will the project conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Proposed courthouse-related traffic is irregular and variable on a daily basis primarily due to irregular patterns of juror calls. Thus, the AOC's analysis is based on a typical high traffic day for the courts.

The proposed project would be expected to generate a total of 466 inbound + 117 outbound trips during the AM peak hour of adjacent street traffic. The majority of these trips are on the roadway system today; many would be re-routed in accessing the proposed courthouse. With the improved roadway connections and capacities scheduled to be in place by 2015, delay due to proposed project traffic increases will be minimal at study intersections. This volume of traffic will not be substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system.

Table 4.16-1, below, which has been replicated from Appendix F, shows that 2015 Base Case + proposed project operating conditions (levels of service) at each analyzed intersection for the weekday AM peak hour will continue at or better than levels of service C at all intersections (assuming provision of needed improvements at the Mall Drive/ 7th Street intersection).

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[11] Johnathan Doyel, Deputy Public Works Director, City of Hanford, e-mail and telephone communications, August, 2010.

Table 4.16-1. AM Peak Hour Intersection Level of Service

INTERSECTION	AM Peak Hour		
	Existing	**Near Term 2015**	**2015 Plus Proposed Project Site**
1. Grangeville Blvd./ 12th Avenue	C-21.8 (1)	C-21.0	C-21.0
2. Greenfield Avenue/ 12th Avenue*	C-21.1 (2)	B-18.4 (1)	B-19.9
3. Liberty Street/ 12th Avenue **	C-24.0/C-18.6 (3)	D-25.2/C-18.6 (3)	B-11.8
4. Centennial Plaza Driveway/ 12th Avenue	B-11.4 (1)	B-11.4	B-11.4
5. Lacey Boulevard/ 12th Avenue	C-21.6 (1)	C-22.9	C-23.2
6. Mall Drive/12th Avenue	B-17.6 (1)	C-23.3	C-25.4
7.WB S.R.198 Ramps/12th Avenue	B-13.9 (1)	B-14.7	B-15.8
8. EB S.R.198 Ramps/12th Avenue	B-18.5 (1)	C-20.3	C-23.4
9. Lacey Blvd./Centennial Drive	B-15.4 (1)	B-16.5	B-16.5
10. Lacey Blvd./Kings Co Drive/ Mall Drive	B-19.4 (1)	B-19.7	C-20.4
11. Mall Drive/ 7th Street	C-22.3/C-18.9 (4)	D-28.4/C-22.8	D-33.1/C-24.4
12. Lacey Blvd./Campus Drive	C-20.3 (1)	C-20.5	C-20.6
13. Campus Drive/ 7th Street	A-9.7 (5)	B-11.3	B-12.5
14. Lacey Blvd./11th Avenue	C-20.2 (1)	C-20.6	C-20.7
15. 7th Street/ 11th Avenue	B-17.8 (1)	B-18.0	B-18.9
16. 5th Street/ 11th Avenue	B-10.7 (1)	B-10.7	B-10.7
17. 4th Street/ 11th Avenue	B-13.7 (1)	B-14.0	B-14.1
18. 3rd Street/ 11th Avenue	B-14.7 (1)	B-14.8	B-14.8

Notes:

(1) Signalized LOS – Average control delay in seconds.

(2) Side street stop sign controlled LOS – Average control delay in seconds – Greenfield Avenue approach.

(3) Side street stop sign controlled LOS – Average delay in seconds –Liberty Street left turn/Liberty Street approach.

(4) Side street stop sign controlled LOS – Average delay in seconds 7th Street left turn/7th Street approach.

(5) All-Way-Stop LOS.

* By 2015 Greenfield Avenue will be extended west of its intersection with 12th Avenue; a signal would be provided at the Greenfield Avenue/12th Avenue intersection.

**By 2015 with the new courthouse constructed just west of the new Kings County Jail, the Liberty Street/ 12th Avenue intersection would have Kings County Drive extended as its westbound approach; this is planned as part of the proposed project.

Source: Crane Transportation Group

The high activity day analyzed in this study is representative of a reasonable worst-case scenario. Since intersections will operate at acceptable levels of service, the proposed project's impacts on the circulation system are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) *Will the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Table 4.16-1 (above) shows that 2015 Base Case + proposed project operating conditions (levels of service) at each analyzed intersection for the weekday AM peak hour will continue at or better than LOS C at all intersections except the Mall Drive/7th Street intersection, which will operate at LOS D under 2015 without proposed project and with proposed project conditions. Proposed project traffic would not result in any analyzed intersection currently operating acceptably to operate unacceptably with the addition of proposed project volumes, thus, the proposed project is considered to result in less than significant impacts to intersection operation. Proposed project traffic would not result in any 12th Avenue roadway segment currently operating acceptably to operate unacceptably with the addition of proposed project

volumes, thus, the proposed project is considered to result in less than significant impacts to roadway operation.

The proposed project will comply with the goals, objectives and policies of the City's General Plan, and will not conflict with applicable transportation planning including transit availability standards.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?*

No Impact. Consolidation of existing courthouse facilities in the cities of Hanford and Lemoore to the proposed courthouse will have no impact on air traffic patterns, and will not increase air traffic levels nor result in aviation safety risks.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project result in inadequate emergency access?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project site will conform to recommendations of the Superior Court, the Kings County Sheriff's Department, and the City's Fire Department for provision of adequate emergency access. The proposed project will provide a new roadway connection. Furthermore, the proposed project will not include closure of any existing public through street that is currently used for emergency services, nor interfere with the adopted emergency response plan. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) *Will the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*

Less Than-Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project site and intersection improvements (new traffic signal at the 12th Avenue/Liberty Street intersection) will conform to the engineering and design standards of the Superior Court of California (Kings County), and

will comply with the California Building Code[12]; California Government Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 24; California Energy Code, Americans With Disabilities Act; American Disability Act Accessibility Guidelines (Section 11); and Division of the State Architect's Access Checklist. Development of the proposed project's intersection improvements and new traffic signal will conform to the City's engineering and design standards.

The proposed project will not involve incompatible uses that will substantially increase hazards. The proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) Will the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such features?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation. Currently, bus transportation is available along Lacey Boulevard at Kings County Drive. The proposed project will include bicycle parking and pedestrian access to and from the site with pedestrian signal and crosswalks provided at the 12th Avenue Street/ Kings County Drive/ Liberty Street intersection. The proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.17 UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS

a) Will the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project determine that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The City provides wastewater services to its residential, commercial, and industrial users within the City limits and

[12] Edition in effect as of the commencement of the schematic design phase of a particular court project.

some unincorporated areas. The Wastewater Treatment Facility operates under Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 5 01-153, issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The City's wastewater treatment facility expanded in 2003, increasing its existing capacity to 8 million gallons per day (mdg). The City expects to exceed this capacity before the year 2025 if current population growth continues. As noted in the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan, future upgrades will be needed to accommodate future growth and achieve capacity of 10.5 mgd (City of Hanford, 2006).

The proposed project site is within a Hanford Planning area that has been designated for future public facilities development in the General Plan. The proposed courthouse is anticipated by the General Plan, and was taken into account in the development of population projections used in the General Plan and in the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan adopted by the City in 2006.

The proposed project will replace four existing court facilities within the City that are currently served by the City's Waste Water Treatment Facility, and will add operations from one court facility relocated from the City of Lemoore. The relocation of the Lemoore operations will add approximately 43 court personnel, and approximately an additional 360 visitors on a daily basis[13].

The proposed courthouse will produce wastewater during business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The generated wastewater will be negligible in comparison to the daily maximum capacity 8 mgd. Although the addition of the Lemoore court facility will contribute to existing demand for wastewater services in Hanford, the increase will not be significant. The AOC therefore concludes that the proposed project's impacts on wastewater demand will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[13] Projections include the planned 12 courtrooms, 14 judgeships, staff additions and projected growth in overall court activity by 2015

b) *Will the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. Discharges of storm water associated with construction of the proposed courthouse will be regulated under the NPDES permit issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Operation of the proposed courthouse will generate sanitary wastewater, similar to that generated by the existing courthouse. As previously discussed, the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Waste Discharge Requirements Order regulates wastewater discharges processed at the City's Wastewater Treatment Facility. The proposed project will not generate wastewater with high levels of contaminants that will exceed wastewater treatment requirements regulated by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The proposed project will therefore have a less-than-significant impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) *Will the project require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The City's water system consists of 19 water wells, 190 miles of water mains (sizes 4" through 24"), 14,874 water connections, 1,648 fire hydrants, 3 water storage tanks (storage capacity 2.8 million gallons) (City of Hanford, 2006).

As previously discussed, the proposed project will replace four existing court facilities within the City that currently receive water and wastewater services from the City and will add approximately 43 court personnel, and approximately 360 visitors on a daily basis to that will require additional water and wastewater services.

Although the addition of the Lemoore operations will result in an increase in water and wastewater demand, the proposed project will not require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities because: the AOC's design will incorporate features that comply with the requirements for LEED and the AOC's design guidelines for implementation of measures to conserve water, consideration of water reuse systems, use of low-flow plumbing fixtures, and water-efficient

appliances. The proposed project will therefore have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) *Will the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which will cause significant environmental effects?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. The proposed project site is a graded vacant site. The proposed courthouse will increase in impervious surfaces and will increase the amount of runoff from the site. However, as discussed in Section 4.9, the proposed project contemplates open, landscaped areas that will reduce storm water runoff into the storm drainage facilities. The City currently operates and maintains a storm water drainage system along the perimeter of the proposed site and will approve all storm water drainage connections and system expansions to accommodate additional drainage from the site.

The proposed project will also be required to comply with NPDES regulations requiring the proposed project to implement measures to control runoff from the proposed project, thus minimizing impacts to storm water drainage systems. The proposed project will therefore not require new storm drains or result in the expansion of existing facilities. Thus, the proposed project will have a less-than-significant impact.

Mitigation Measures. No mitigation measures are required.

e) *Will the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As previously discussed in Section 4.9, the City's municipal water system extracts its water supply from underground aquifers via 19 groundwater wells. Water is conveyed from the wells to the consumers via its water distribution system.

The City's maximum day demand is approximately 17.0 mgd. According to the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan, the City's current groundwater supply availability is 31.6 mgd, thus there is adequate source of water supply to meet the City's maximum day demand, including the proposed project, which has limited water demands.

Because the proposed project does not include new housing and the proposed project's very minor increase in employment will not induce significant population growth, the AOC expects that the proposed project will not require additional water supply needs beyond what the City has already anticipated in the Urban Water Management Plan. As discussed in Section 2.5, the AOC's design will incorporate features that comply with the requirements for LEED that incorporate sustainability and water efficiency. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) Will the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Less-Than-Significant Impact: The City's Refuse Division collects refuse from residential and commercial properties within the City limits, and will collect waste from the proposed courthouse. The City disposes wastes at the Kings Waste & Recycling Authority Facility located east of State Route 43, just south of the City. The facility separates recyclable and recoverable waste and transfers the remaining refuse to the Chemical Waste Management Kettleman Hills Landfill located west of Interstate 5 along State Route 41 (owned and operated by Chemical Waste Management, Inc.) The Kettleman Hills Landfill is currently operating at 55 percent capacity.

Since the proposed project represents a reallocation of waste disposal services already being provided to the existing Hanford court facilities and there is adequate landfill capacity for current demands, the AOC concludes that impacts associated with the proposed project to solid waste disposal services will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

g) Will the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less-Than-Significant Impact: Adequate solid waste storage areas at the proposed project site will be available, and waste will be stored in containers in a manner that complies with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations. Solid waste collection vehicles will be given adequate access to the waste storage area. In addition, the proposed project developer(s) will take any necessary measures to comply with applicable

California Code of Regulations, State Department of Health Services, and the San Joaquin Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts will be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) *Will the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

Less-Than-Significant Impact. As discussed in Section 4.5 (Cultural Resources) the proposed project would have less than significant impacts to archaeological resources at the proposed project site.

b) *Will the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)*

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. The proposed project may have potentially significant short-term impacts on air quality (Section 4.3), and noise (Section 4.12) during the construction phase. However, implementation of mitigation measures in those sections will reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

The probability of construction of other proposed projects in the area and their construction timetables are uncertain due to current economic conditions, and the AOC believes that construction of the proposed courthouse will be complete in 2015, before other anticipated projects begin construction. Since potential impacts from the proposed project and future projects will be mitigated in accordance with local and State regulations and the construction of other projects will likely occur after completion of the proposed courthouse, the AOC concludes that the cumulative impacts from the proposed project will be less than significant.

c) *Will the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated. The proposed project has the potential to produce significant physical effects on the environment for air quality (Section 4.3), and noise (Section 4.12). These effects are discussed in their respective sections, and implementation of the required mitigations under the proposed project will reduce the impacts to levels that will be less than significant.

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6.0 INVENTORY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

6.1 AIR QUALITY

AIR QUALITY 1

When weather conditions promote potential generation of fugitive dust, the AOC will control dust emissions by stabilizing all disturbed areas (including spoil piles) that are not being actively utilized for construction purposes. Construction personnel will use water applications, chemical stabilizers or suppressants, tarps, or other suitable covers or vegetative ground covers for dust control.

AIR QUALITY 2

If construction operations transport materials off the proposed project site, the AOC shall ensure that all materials are covered or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions. The AOC shall also ensure that transport containers have at least 2 feet of freeboard space from the top of the container.

AIR QUALITY 3

Construction personnel will install and maintain a track-out control device or utilize a carryout and track-out prevention procedure that achieves an equivalent or greater level of control. Construction personnel will remove track-out material at the end of each workday, but if track-out extends 50 or more feet from the site, then construction personnel will be immediately remove the track-out. Construction personnel will not be use dry rotary brushes unless sufficient wetting limits visible dust emissions.

AIR QUALITY 4

If construction operations carry visible soil material onto public streets, construction personnel will sweep all paved construction, parking, and staging areas daily with water sweepers.

AIR QUALITY 5

Construction personnel will limit idling of all diesel engines to less than 5 minutes unless such idling is necessary to accomplish the work for which the equipment is designed. Ensure equipment is maintained properly.

AIR QUALITY 6

The Air District's Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review) requires that an air impact assessment of the project be conducted consistent with the rule and mitigation measures be proposed and implemented depending on the results of the assessment. The project will implement additional mitigation measures as agreed upon with the Air District.

6.2 NOISE

NOISE 1

Restrict construction activities to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., from Monday through Saturday.

NOISE 2

Ensure all construction equipment is properly maintained and operated and equipped with mufflers.

NOISE 3

The AOC's construction contractor will install and maintain a 8-foot-tall plywood sound barrier along 12th Avenue from the parcel's northern property line to the edge of the northern curb of the Kings County Drive extension where the extension connects with 12th Avenue.

7.0 LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	☐
I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	X
I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.	☐
I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.	☐
I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.	☐

The Administrative Office of the Courts
Signature Agency

Jerome J. Ripperda

Jerome J. Ripperda, Environmental Analyst 28 September, 2010
Printed Name/Title Date